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RULERS OF INDIA

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SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER

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JAMES THOMASON

BY

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE, BART.

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PREFACE

THE Author desires to acknowledge cordially the great assistance rendered to him in the preparation of many parts of this work by Miss Lucy Clifford. a granddaughter of James Thomason.

He is also grateful for the kind co-operation afforded by Major-General George Hutchinson, R.E., C.B., C.S.I., son of the Major Hutchinson mentioned in Chapter V. of this memoir; and by Mr. William Johnston of Cowhill, Dumfries, whose first wife was Thomason's daughter.

The Author wishes to add that as this volume is largely drawn from his personal recollections, and gives prominence to the religious aspects of Mr. Thomason's character, it differs somewhat in tone and in scope from the more strictly historical retrospects in the biographies of the Rulers of India

Series. The Author has had to satisfy his conscience in his presentment of one whom he has long venerated as a truly good and great man. His high estimate of Mr. Thomason, and his religious treatment of the subject, are based on his own intimate acquaintance with Mr. Thomason's life: and alike for that high estimate and for the religious treatment of the subject, the Author desires to take the undivided responsibility.

R. T.

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGES
I	INTRODUCTION	9–21
II.	PARENTAGE	22–33
III	EDUCATION	34–42
IV.	CAREER IN INDIA	43–54
V.	LIFE AS A DISTRICT OFFICER	55–73
VI.	THE NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES	74–90
VII.	THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR	91–118
VIII.	PRIVATE LIFE IN GOVERNMENT HOUSE	119–137
IX.	THE LAND SETTLEMENT	138–161
X.	CANALS OF IRRIGATION	162–169
XI.	PUBLIC INSTRUCTION AND GENERAL POLICY	170–180
XII.	THE END	181–208

NOTE

The orthography of proper names follows the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Lucknow, &c., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

a, as in woman: *á*, as in father: *i*, as in pin: *í*, as in intrigue: *o*, as in cold: *u*, as in bull: *ú*, as in rural: *e*, as in grey.

JAMES THOMASON

CHAPTER I

Introduction

Of this memoir the early portion will be written from authentic records, mostly public but partly private, compared also with the recollections of some who are still surviving. The latter portion will be written largely from my own knowledge, observation and evidence, verified too by some of those who are informed as well as, or even better than, myself. The subject of the memoir was, when I first saw him during 1848, in the plenitude of fame, influence and authority. He showed to me, a very young man just entering upon life, the utmost kindness in that year and in subsequent years. His manner was at first sedate, as if he wished to penetrate the disposition of those he met before proceeding further with their acquaintance. As time went on he relaxed, and his conversation would flow in a stream of instruction, until I seemed to know his inner mind

regarding religion, politics, the public service, the natives of India. His kindness, courtesy and attention brightened my rising career with rays of hope. And now, after the lapse of forty years, busy, eventful and distracted, the retrospect of his conversation is among my most sunny memories, and his figure stands out resplendently in the picture-gallery of my recollections.

My portrait of him, then, will be drawn by the hand of affection. But while endeavouring fully to do justice to his virtues, talents and achievements, I shall strive to delineate him with discrimination, to depict him, not ideally, but actually as he was, and to avoid ascribing to him qualities which indeed great men might be supposed to possess, but which he had no opportunity of displaying. For, on the whole, he did not resemble many among the rulers of India; and in some respects his position in Anglo-Indian history is almost unique.

James Thomason was born at Shelford, near Cambridge, in 1804, and died in northern India, at Bareilly, in 1853, amongst the people whom he had governed. When a whole community was lamenting his unexpected death in the zenith of fame and authority, men felt that it was impossible by any deliberate verdict to determine his place in history. But now, after the lapse of more than a full generation, it is possible to fix the position which he should occupy in the Walhalla of Anglo-Indian worthies, in the muster-roll of those who have ruled in India.

Upon a retrospect of all that happened before and since his time, we may pronounce that in the civil administration, on a vast stage during a period of peace, he has never been surpassed in the annals of the East, and was one of the most successful Englishmen that have ever borne sway in India.

This definition of his merit and success is carefully limited. In order to arrive at an exact understanding of what he was in his surroundings and circumstances, we may at the outset indicate what he was not, and what he never became—or rather what he had neither the chance nor the opportunity of becoming.

For example, some rulers of India have been as great in time of war as of peace, or even greater, have encountered fearful emergencies, and have directed the national forces with skill and energy. Some, though brought up to the civil profession, have in time of warlike trial shown that they would have been fortunate had their lot been cast in the profession of arms. Some have been confronted with troubles of special intensity—rebellion, pestilence, famine—and their successes have been centred on particular events. Some have had to deal with wild tribes or with newly-conquered races, and to organize administration with the strong right arm. Some, with inborn genius, have originated measures which after their time were carried into full effect by others, and so bore abundant fruit; their historic claims being bound up with these measures. Some,

by a combination of romantic and practical qualities, or by deeds of signal nobility, have raised up a mighty individuality as a household word among Europeans and Natives. Some have run a great career among Native States as diplomatists, and as representatives of the British Paramount with the Asiatic allies or vassals of the Empire. Some by study and research have added largely to the sum of European knowledge regarding Oriental laws, languages, antiquities. All these classes have contributed towards the formation of the fabric of British rule in India.

But to none of them did James Thomason belong. Whether his genius was fitted for these spheres, whether the bent of his mind was inclined strongly in these directions, are questions which need not be discussed. For he never was tried in these respects. He was, in the very best sense of the term, a man of peace. He was a great civil governor in ordinary times—that, indeed, in the highest degree; but not more than that. He took up, with comprehensive grasp and unerring insight, various principles and measures of the utmost consequence. Some of these, originated by others, had been advocated or begun before his time, but had not been carried to their legitimate conclusions. He, however, elaborated them till they became fully operative, till they produced all the good they were capable of producing. Though not the inventor, he identified himself with the inventions, and advanced

them to stages which the inventors themselves would hardly have hoped to attain. Others, so to speak, may have rough-hewn the marble; but he applied to it the refinement of the sculptor's art, imparting grace, force, animation, dignity. He did all this, though some of his measures were by himself originated. He strove for, and actually won efficiency according to the highest standard, and upon a scale so ample as to be magnificent. His labours were fraught with untold blessings to the generation living under his rule, which benefits have been continued to their immediate successors, and will be felt by future generations.

Without any disparagement of the other careers to which allusion has been made, which are, indeed, most valuable and important, which strike the senses, attract the sympathies, or appeal to the imagination of mankind, it may be said that his career was supremely useful. There may be patriotic pride or national rejoicing on the acquisition of an empire; but in its train there follow duty and responsibility. It is easy to acknowledge the sacred obligation; but it is always hard, sometimes almost insuperably difficult, to fulfil the same. No man in India ever came nearer to this fulfilment than James Thomason; and very few have come so near as he. When provinces have been conquered or annexed, their pacification effected, the civilizing system of British rule introduced among them—all which demands capacity, courage, fortitude on the part of rulers—there

ever remains the less conspicuous, but still arduous task of governing them well and wisely. Yet this task must be discharged with some efficiency if they are to prosper. If the enjoyment of liberty is precarious, if rights are undefined, if property is unprotected, if oppression in any large class of cases shall gain the upper hand—they can neither grow in wealth nor rise in the social scale. It is the certainty of reaping the results of industry that supplies the mainspring to energy. From that energy will arise the happiness of innumerable homes. From such happiness, again, there will accrue those material advantages which foster education, stimulate mental ambition, and lay the foundation of moral advancement. Such progress will then open out the vista of still higher good. These things may perhaps be reckoned among the elements of sociology. They may be formulated and urged with insistency; but in Asiatic countries it is hard to obtain them at all, even for a time, and harder still to place them in a position of permanent security. The ablest men among the British in India are ever aspiring or pressing towards these ends; but the most successful among them would be the first to admit deficiencies, shortcomings, backslidings.

Now James Thomason did undertake these weighty matters with a determination and a faith that might almost move mountains. Since his time the amplest recognition has been accorded to principles and measures for which he laboriously contended. To the cause of improvement there have been devoted resources which

to him would have seemed fabulous, too bountiful to be within the range of hope. Since his day the amelioration all round, the movements in every quarter, have been immense. Nevertheless—in reference to the circumstances of his time, the limitation of the means at his command, the surroundings amidst which he had to lead his public life, the distractions which agitated the body politic, the comparatively sluggish current of opinion—his concentrated energy, his resolution tempered like steel, his zeal glistening like gold in the fire, are worthy to be contemplated by his countrymen. For every man who leaves our British shores for a civil career in India we should pray that the spirit of Thomason may be with him, and that his bow may be strong as that of Thomason.

In his personal disposition the pervading characteristic was Christian seriousness, combined with catholic charity and gentleness, without the remotest approach to narrowness or bigotry. His virtues were entirely of the Christian type, and his moral adornment partook of the Christian graces. Born and bred in the doctrine and discipline of the Church of England, he steadfastly adhered to that form of worship. But he was broad in sympathy and tolerant in sentiment. His religion was not obtruded on the notice of men, but it was tacitly understood by all who approached him. Emanating gently, it penetrated all around him. Its existence was known throughout his widely-extended sphere. His example, indirectly felt more than directly seen, was

a power working for the good of others. Thus his life was a pattern of how a Christian Governor ought to live.

His character, founded upon the Rock of Ages, naturally displayed calmness as a dominant quality; and in subordination to this were patience, moderation of thought, and intellectual deliberation. His kindness was not demonstrative, nor evoked without consideration; when awakened, it shone with mild beams, but was directed effectively. Firmness, energy and zeal served as bulwarks to his character. For firmness, his mind was ordinarily made up slowly, but when once fixed was imperturbable or even inflexible. His energy was not meteoric nor ardent, but was unfailingly constant and perseveringly strenuous. His zeal was as a slow fire, but it burned unceasingly and inextinguishably. There was innate dignity of soul in him, but it was clothed in humility, and in unostentatious simplicity. Though outwardly he was never enthusiastic, yet an enthusiasm glowed within him, and it was the enthusiasm of humanity. His character was composed, so to speak, of two strata; the first consisted of enlightenment and sweetness, the second of resolution and persistency. The two elements were joined together by the bond of Christian faith.

Intellectually, the most prominent feature was his capacity for mental toil, beyond the ordinary standard even of great and able men. There was a variety in his endowments, for he possessed those

perceptive faculties which usually make scientific travellers or distinguished explorers. He could discern and note external objects of all kinds with surprising quickness and precision. He was an adept in criticism, and with him the habit of criticizing was unconquerable. His power of reasoning, retentive memory, aptitude for some kinds of physical science, would by themselves have entitled him to high rank. Together with this talent for dealing with things material, he possessed insight and intuition regarding mental subjects and moral philosophy, with much power of self-introspection. His proficiency in some of the most difficult among the classical languages of Asia proved that to whatever branch of learning he might bend his mind, there he would evince scholarship. Otherwise, in what is known as general culture, though by no means defective, he was not remarkable. In such a man imagination could not be dormant, indeed in some particular directions it was active: but in its relation to philosophy, poetry and art, he was not more than ordinarily endowed. The son of one who preached with eloquence, he had not inherited the oratorical power of his father. But he always made simply and well such official speeches as were required of him. He had the pen of a ready writer, but he undertook no literary work, and never essayed anything beyond official composition, in which he was most skilled. Though not a man of special genius or transcendent gifts, yet he had a winning personality. Even if

his movements were unobtrusive and his progress tranquil, he was essentially a man of action.

His manner, in consonance with his general character, was uniformly suave and urbane. But it appeared reserved, or even cold, to those who were not intimately acquainted with him, and they necessarily formed the majority of the vast number with whom a Governor comes in contact. A natural quietude of temperament, and an unfaltering presence of mind, made some observers think him constrained, while in truth he was only noting carefully what there was to be seen or heard. Perhaps he had but a dim perception of popular arts, certainly he had no thought for what is commonly known as popularity. By habit as well as nature, he had self-command and an evenly-balanced mind. The annoyances incidental to a high station, the strain and stress of public affairs, never agitated his demeanour. Even the most tender anxieties for those nearest him, would not break the surface of his calm, nor betray him into any expression of his feelings.

But if his bearing did not arouse enthusiasm in those who never saw very much of him, yet it certainly did with all who enjoyed his friendship, and they were many. These knew the rich wealth of goodness and virtue that lay behind that impassive manner, and in such as they, no ruler in India ever excited more enthusiastic sentiments.

His disposition was homely, and he was tenderly affectionate in all domestic relations. Men regarded

him as the grave ruler in the seat of power; but of what was the great man inwardly thinking? The upper current of his thoughts sped swift and strong towards national affairs; the under current moved noiselessly towards the wife gone before to heaven, the motherless children in England, the Judgment Throne before which he and his must one day stand.

His handwriting is characteristic, not bold nor flowing, but regular and refined, strong as fibre, like thin metal wire. In his private notes without number, and his lengthy memoranda, not a word is slurred over, every letter is formed, and no alteration is found anywhere.

In frame he was spare and slim, but in stature he was a head and shoulders above ordinary men. This height was diminished in middle life by an accident on horseback, which caused him to stoop slightly; and, though not actually lame, he usually walked with some support from a stick. He looked like one who in youth had outgrown his strength, and such unhappily proved to be the case. His health seldom failed, but was never robust; and his physique, though far from weak, was not quite strong enough for the arduous part he had to fulfil in life. His habits were sufficiently active for his work, but he was not addicted to field sports or to violent exercise out of doors. Though not quite an equestrian, he rode much at certain seasons, and he traversed repeatedly on horseback the broad territories under his charge. Despite some inevitable drawbacks, he had nervous

force, brain-power and enduring fibre in an uncommon degree. The countenance also betokened his idiosyncrasy. His complexion, though not pale, was far from ruddy; the features were not marked but bore an expression of serenity; the mouth indicated refinement and firmness; the hair was flowing but somewhat prematurely grey. The beaming, piercing, yet benignant eyes, overshadowed by the massive brow, and the expansive forehead as a 'lofty dome of thought,' will never be forgotten by those who knew him best and loved him most.

A beautiful portrait in words was drawn just sixty years ago of James Thomason's parents (the Rev. Thomas Thomason and his wife) by Charles Simeon, and it may be quoted here:—

'Were I to compare him with anything it would be with the light on which a great diversity of rays are joined, but no one more conspicuous than another. Towards God he was distinguished by a simplicity of mind and purpose, and towards man by a placidity of manner and deportment. I never saw anything of self blended with his actions. He seemed to have one aim and end in all he did; and what he did was never by effort so much as by a habit. In fact, every day with him, from morning till evening, was a kind of equable course, something like that of the sun in a Cambridge atmosphere. He gave a tempered light, never blazing forth with unusual splendour, but diffusing to all around him a chastened influence. Everything was done by him in its season, but in so quiet a way as not to attract any particular attention. There was an extraordinary resemblance between him and Mrs. Thomason. Each executed a great deal every day; though there was much business there was no bustle, no

parade. Each lived only for the Lord, and to glorify Him seemed to be the one business of their lives. There was not a work of benevolence within their reach but that they engaged in it, just as if it had been a domestic duty.'

The likeness thus delineated of the father and mother survived in their distinguished son, and the description of them is so applicable to him that it might almost serve as an epitaph in his memory.

CHAPTER II

Parentage

The parentage and family of James Thomason are worthy of observation, because thereby the evolution of his mental and moral qualities can be discerned.

In the latter half of the eighteenth century Mr. and Mrs. Thomason lived at Plymouth. He went on business to the West Indies, leaving his wife and infant son at home. There he died, while his widow and son, named Thomas, stayed in England. She remained for some time a widow, taking care of her son; then she married Mr. Dornford of Kent, and became again a widow. Afterwards she took up her residence at or near Cambridge, about the beginning of the present century, and was counted among the many friends of Charles Simeon, who was then at the very height of his religious career. From the memoir of Simeon it would appear that of all the ladies whom he knew in the latter part of his life, none held quite so high a place in his esteem and regard as Mrs. Dornford. He used to speak of her as his sister in Christ, even as his mother, though she was but a few

years senior to himself. She died in 1835, when he was approaching his end. About that time, a friend sent a rich present of fruit from the Levant for her to his care, and he replied to the donor—'Alas! our beloved friend has, for the last three months, been eating of the fruit in Paradise.' There stands in the Chancel of his own church, Holy Trinity in Cambridge, a tablet which was placed there in her memory by him, and of which the inscription may be reproduced, as it must have been written by himself.

'Sacred to the beloved memory of Esther, Relict of Josiah Dornford Esq., of Deptford Road, Kent. For more than twenty years a devout and humble worshipper within these walls. Living in the full enjoyment of Faith and Hope, and exhibiting a bright pattern of every Christian grace. She meekly bowed beneath the chastening hand of a merciful Father and peacefully resigned her spirit Jan. 13th, 1835. In the 82nd year of her age.'

The son Thomas Thomason, in due course, enters Magdalene College, Cambridge, and after taking his degree, obtains a Fellowship. Next he becomes a Tutor at Queen's College, and is admitted to Holy Orders. He forms with Charles Simeon, then much occupied in parochial affairs, a friendship which becomes strengthened with the holiest bonds. He accepts under Simeon a curacy extending not only to Holy Trinity parish, but to other parishes which came under Simeon's cure. He has to resign his position in Queen's College on his marriage in 1799 with Miss Fawcett of Scaleby Castle, the daughter of

a clergyman in Cumberland. This lady occupied in Simeon's regard a place second only to that of Mrs. Dornford. To her he wrote that he should never lose the brotherly feelings with which her society and example had inspired him.

Among the cures which Simeon with his saintly benevolence undertook, was that of three contiguous villages a few miles out of Cambridge, named—Stapleford, Great Shelford and Little Shelford. Thomas Thomason took up his abode at Little Shelford, in a well-wooded spot, and invited Simeon to resort thither in summer time for change and quiet after the work in Cambridge. Fortunately he has left a brief, but concise description of the place:—

'A very pleasant spot, where there are two bridges—close to that is our mansion, with walks extending down to the river—a more beautiful place I never saw; it is the garden of Cambridgeshire. Simeon's room is on the ground floor which opens into the pleasure garden, where he can walk privately. One door of his room opens into my study.'

The house still stands, and can be identified, but its grounds exceed in beauty even the description given by Thomas Thomason. The plain of the river Cam lying to the south of Cambridge, though nowadays well cultivated, is bare and naked to a degree very unusual in England. In the midst of this plain, there is a very slight depression causing the Cam to form branches which rejoin the main stream as it were with loops. There is thus a 'meeting of the waters,' accounting for the two bridges. Former proprietors

had wisely chosen this place for arboriculture. Every tree known in England grows here with commanding height and umbrageous expansion. Thus Little Shelford has become a continuous grove of imposing dimensions, rising up with sylvan majesty in the champaign solitude. The sycamore, the lime, the plane, the acacia, the beech, the elm, the oak, are arranged in groups, in double avenues, in belts, or are growing singly. The ground-ivy forms a thick green carpet, which in autumn is overlaid with the fallen leaves in all their golden colours. The water of the Cam and its branches glides silently with a deep metallic green, affording artistic contrast to the foliage. Yet there is no excess of thicket and under-growth to prevent the sunsets being seen through the openings in the wood, as through windows. From the age of the trees, it is probable that the place must have looked almost as well in Thomas Thomason's time as it looks to-day.

Here then was James Thomason, the statesman. born on May 3rd, 1804. Hard by is the little church with a suitable tower of the elder architecture, and inside is a stone font, where the infant James must have been baptized.

A few years later Little Shelford was destined to receive a further distinction. Mr. Preston, one of Simeon's coadjutors, set up a private school there. Among his pupils were Thomas Babington Macaulay, and the eldest son of William Wilberforce. Indeed, Macaulay's boyish letters regarding his early studies

were dated from this place[1]. Mr. Preston remained there till 1814, when he removed to Aspeden, as will be explained hereafter.

For some years yet, Thomas Thomason was a fellow-labourer with Simeon, and won in the affection of that holy man, a place second only to that of Henry Martyn. Probably Simeon regarded Martyn more than any man he ever met, but next after him, he esteemed Thomas Thomason. There are more letters extant of Simeon's addressed to Thomas Thomason, and overflowing with affection, than to any other of his many correspondents. Thomason's preaching attracted the admiration of so eminent a judge as Simeon, who declared that it abounded with 'divine unction.' For some time, Henry Martyn was joint curate with Thomason under Simeon, and then accepted a chaplaincy under the East India Company, an acceptance which became memorable in the annals of Christendom. This example powerfully affected Thomason, who in 1808 became one of the East India Company's Chaplains, and set sail for Bengal, accompanied by his wife and their son James, then four years old. Among their fellow-passengers were Mr. and Mrs. William Grant, who became specially related to the Thomasons, as will be seen hereafter.

After some four months, in the usual course with a prosperous voyage, the ship entered the Bay of Bengal. Early in the morning she struck on a reef, off the eastern coast of the Bay, and in a few

[1] See *Lord Macaulay's Life* by Trevelyan, pp. 39 to 51.

minutes was broken into pieces. Thomason himself happened to be up and dressed; he had just time to rush into his cabin and bring his wife and his son James on deck before the catastrophe. The ship's officers behaved with coolness and intrepidity; despite the loss of the first boat that was lowered, the second boat was launched successfully on a rough sea with squalls overhead. All the passengers and most of the crew escaped from the vessel before she sank. She was, according to the custom with Indiamen in those days, sailing together with companion ships. Her companions, however, were not at hand for the moment, though they ultimately proved to be within reach. After three hours rowing and sailing in an open boat, the shelterless passengers were met by the ships. They soon arrived at Calcutta, destitute of personal belongings and almost of clothing. But this destitution only served to evoke that generous and cordial hospitality for which the Anglo-Indian community has ever been distinguished. Thomas Thomason entered forthwith upon his duties as Chaplain of the Church then known as the Old or Mission Church, a name which it still bears. Thus, the little boy James, the future statesman, made his first landing in India after a narrow escape from mortal peril.

During the voyage Thomas Thomason had prosecuted his Oriental studies. Soon after landing in India he became proficient in the Arabic, Persian, and Urdu languages, attaining ultimately a high degree

of scholarship. These attainments he devoted to the translation of the Scriptures. Still his official work was among the civil servants, the lawyers, the merchants, the clerks of Calcutta; with them he was to pray, to them he was to preach. His congregations, though occasionally large, were ordinarily limited in number. But many of his new parishioners were representative men. Nowadays the European community in Calcutta, with the ecclesiastical organization, the parochial ministrations, the places of worship belonging to various Christian bodies, the schools and colleges, enjoys as many advantages as any community anywhere. But in those days the situation was very different, when both churches and clergy were few. Under such circumstances a chaplain of persuasive eloquence, of personal weight and moral authority, soon became not only a shining light but also a factor of some power in society. Such a part Thomason soon began to fill. His oratory in the pulpit was effective for its holy purpose. An address was presented to him by his parishioners, proving how fully he had caused them to remember his texts and the reasoning by which he had enforced his precepts. Among his hearers was the Earl of Moira, then Governor-General, and he was chosen to accompany His Lordship on an extended tour in northern India. He is now to visit, in the infancy of British rule, the very Provinces which his son, then a boy, was destined to govern. There is a strange interest in noting the impression which these Provinces made on the father in 1812

as contrasted with the high hopes with which they inspired the son from 1843 to 1853.

Before starting from Calcutta, Thomas Thomason had joined with other far-seeing and benevolent persons in urging on the Governor-General in Council the inauguration of some system of national instruction for the natives of India. This was to be imparted in the several vernaculars of the country, and was to have its literary foundation in the learned languages of the East. But it was to embrace Western knowledge also, and the ideas of European civilization. The superior portions of it were to extend to instruction in English. It was to include higher institutions, central and urban schools, and village schools. It was to utilize all existing and indigenous resources of an elementary character, and to engraft on them such organization as European experience might suggest. Considering the delays and difficulties which retarded the introduction of an educational system into India, as indeed into other countries more advantageously situated, we may feel refreshed by reading Thomas Thomason's recommendations made nearly eighty years ago. As he ever had in his thoughts the advancement of true religion, he must have believed that sound secular instruction would pave the way for religious teaching. In his enterprising spirit, his fearless benevolence, his catholic sympathies, this excellent chaplain showed himself to be far in advance of the statesmen in India at that time. He so far impressed the Governor-General

with his ideas that he was commissioned to draw up a general scheme for the education of the Natives. It was for the sake of urging this plan that he was desirous of accompanying His Lordship on this protracted march from Calcutta up the country. His letters written during the journey are full of his anxieties on this behalf. His sad heart might have been comforted could he have foreknown that in the next generation his son James would become the father of elementary education.

During this vast tour of many hundred miles, through the richest and most famous parts of India, the only place that pleased him was Hardwár, where the Ganges debouches from the Himálaya. Arriving at Benares, he writes:—

'I ventured to visit the shrine held so sacred. It was an oppressive sight. The avenues to it are narrow, crowded with Bráhmans and bulls. . . . The horrid din of Bráhmans and religious mendicants, and bulls, and beggars and bells was too much to be endured. I hastened from the place, as from Pandemonium, and thanked God for the Gospel.'

After a tedious voyage in boats up the Ganges he reaches Allahábád, and then proceeds by daily marches, sleeping in tents. His route lies through the heart of Hindustán proper, and the Doáb or Mesopotamia of the Ganges and the Jumna. His view of the country is not cheering; he says:—

'Conceive an immense plain on which are scattered thousands of villages; a few principal towns without variety

and a vast multitude of inhabitants; when you have seen one village or town you have seen all; they are without any of those marks of opulence, civilization, or elegance which delight the English traveller.'

Returning towards Calcutta, and dropping down the Ganges in his boat, he presents some retrospect of what he had seen, thus:—

'The ruins of Delhi are of surprising extent, reaching sixteen miles or more, a sickening sight. Oh! it made us sad to go through the scene of awful desolation. Mosques, temples, houses all in ruin, piles of stones, broken pillars, domes, crumbling walls covered the place. The imperial city presents nothing but the palace to give an idea of its greatness, and only appears grand from the magnificent wall. Within is poverty and departed grandeur—all is going to decay. The famous hall of audience remains, built of marble richly inlaid with stones sufficiently beautiful to realize all our expectations. We saw in the gardens the reigning prince, the poor representative of Timur's house.'

We must admit that for such a man as Thomas Thomason, these passages hardly evince the requisite quality of imagination. There was much to distress the gaze of a stranger, as he justly says. There was squalor close to objects of the highest beauty. Nevertheless, these very scenes have since that time delighted European travellers, and furnished countless subjects for the pencil and the brush. At Benares if he had embarked in a pleasure-boat at sunrise, and floated down the stream of the Ganges past the long river-frontage of the classic city,

when the Hindus with their many-coloured costumes crowd the various flights of steps down to the water's edge—he would have beheld one of the most enlivening and characteristic spectacles to be seen on earth. When wandering through the ruins of old Delhi, he saw nothing save melancholy confusion; but to historians and poets the place speaks volumes. He would have been roused from his depression could he have known that under his son James, in the next generation, these very Provinces would be smiling in prosperity, with the first beams of enlightenment breaking through the darkness of centuries.

Returning to Calcutta he resumes charge of the pastoral duties, to the joy of his European parishioners there and of his native flock. But besides the immediate cure of souls, he occupies himself intensely and effectively with several institutions for the good of India, the orphan asylum for European girls, the Hindu College for the higher education of the natives, the School Book Society, the Church Missionary Society. He prosecutes also his Oriental labours for the translation of the Scriptures into Arabic, Persian, and Hindustáni or Urdu: and begins in addition to learn Bengali. By all this he followed the footsteps of Henry Martyn, into whose holy labours he entered. In all his parochial ministrations, and in respect to several of the institutions of a more general character, he was much aided by his wife, who indeed displayed a model of Christian womanhood before the

women of India[1]. This combination of employment on his part was indeed extraordinary. Reverend Missionaries have done as much as he did for Oriental study and for Native education, but then they had not the care of European congregations. Reverend Chaplains have done as much as he did for these congregations, but then they had not also the affairs of missions nor the Oriental studies to engross them. Take him all in all, he was one of the best clergymen that the Church of England produced during the early part of this century, he was a power for good in the strange land where he pitched his tent, and a beacon for his generation in India.

[1] See the account of her by J. W. Sherer, a very competent authority, in *Annie Child*, 1892. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. See also Sarjent's *Life of Thomas Thomason*: passim.

CHAPTER III

Education

From the parental abode at Calcutta James Thomason was sent to England at the age of ten. It was unfortunate that he was kept in India so long, for this doubtless caused him to shoot up like a tropical plant to a height beyond his strength. Arrived in England he was consigned to the care of Simeon *in loco parentis*. He brought with him, as a present from his parents to Simeon, a miniature of Abdúl-Masíh, the first Muhammadan convert; which picture is still to be seen at Cambridge with Simeon's inscription. He was received by Simeon and Mrs. Dornford with all the tenderness that could be imagined for such an occasion. Indeed, the genuine heartiness of Simeon's emotions, on receiving his god-son, is quite refreshing. He addresses the youth as 'Your loving father in man's stead, your anxious father in God's stead.'

By this time Simeon, now fifty-four years old, had attained that important position in the Church which he held to the end of his life[1]. His long-protracted

[1] See Carus' *Life of Simeon* (1847), chapter xvi.

trouble with his parishioners in the Holy Trinity parish had subsided, and was nearing a happy end. He had outlived prejudices and opposition in Cambridge at least. He had been the means not only of obtaining many pastors for English parishes, but also of sending out to India clergymen who would act as chaplains and would also support the cause of missions. He had been helpful in the formation of several religious societies, and had taken a leading part in the establishment of the Church Missionary Society. He had more than once been chosen as select preacher before the University in Great St. Mary's. His vast work 'Horae Homileticae,' a complete repertory of pulpit subjects and their treatment, is approaching completion. He has begun to occupy his rooms in the upper story of the Fellows' Building in King's College, immediately over the lofty arch, and underneath the leads of the roof where he used to walk for meditation[1]. In these rooms he is destined to hold many meetings year after year, open to all devout comers and especially to undergraduates, for the sake of mutual encouragement, and instruction in religion.

The Cambridge which then presented itself to young Thomason's eyes, differed in aspect from the Cambridge of to-day. The open space in front of King's College and Chapel, the University Library, the Senate House and Great St. Mary's, which now delights visitors, and is one of the finest urban scenes in the kingdom—hardly existed at that time. Houses and other struc-

[1] See Moule's *Memoir of Simeon* (1892), chapter xiv.

tures blocked up the Collegiate buildings and rendered the main street continuously narrow. But if the town was much less beautiful than it is now, the green space extending from the Colleges to the Cam with the avenues and groups of trees, must have had the same varieties of sylvan splendour as those which now astonish the spectator every spring and every autumn. The avenue of trees stretching from the Fellows' Building of King's College to the river,—down which Simeon looked from his windows—no longer exists. The Holy Trinity Church, in which James Thomason attended his first service at Cambridge, must have been then much as it is now; except that the interior is better cared for, and the old-fashioned pews have been altered. But the fine old oaken pulpit, from which Simeon preached many potent discourses, has been removed.

While Simeon was pressing upon all around him the awful importance of earnest and sincere religion, and by passionate efforts striving to make men feel the truth as well as accept it, he assuredly did not fail to inculcate the same principles upon James Thomason, for whose guidance he had made himself responsible. He was the greatest educator of that time. He was a devoted member of the Church of England. He had already preached his sermons before the University on the excellence of the Liturgy. These must have been in the hands of the young James. In his preface to the 'Horae Homileticae' he declares his anxiety to 'give to every portion of the Word of

God its full and proper force, without considering whose scheme it favours, or what system it is likely to advance.' Regarding the Book of Common Prayer, he said, 'No other human work is so free from faults as it is.' Again he wrote:—

'I wish to receive every truth precisely in the way, and to the extent, that it is set forth in the inspired volume; were this the habit of all divines there would soon be an end to all the controversies that have agitated and divided the Church of Christ.'

These views entered into the mind of James Thomason, and abode with him always.

In the series of sermons, preached by Simeon before the University, on the Offices of the Holy Spirit, there occurs the following passage. The doctrine it contains must have been in Simeon's reflections for many years. It must also have affected the ideas of James Thomason, and inspired him with thoughts that surged up in his soul during the last weeks of his life, as will be seen hereafter.

'The Spirit of God is promised to us to dwell in us as in His Temple, and He is further to operate in us effectually for all the ends and purposes of our salvation. His motions may not unfitly be compared with the operations of the soul in the human body. Without the soul the body cannot perform any vital function whatever, but when that spiritual inhabitant is present with us, and discharges its proper offices, we show by the various exercises of our mind and body that it really dwelleth in us.

'Now, the Spirit of God performs in the soul an office somewhat analogous to this—the soul by itself has respect

only to things visible and temporal, but when filled by the Spirit of God, it occupies itself about things invisible and eternal. And precisely as the body needs the presence and operation of the soul for the discharge of its offices in relation to this world, so does the soul need the influences of the Holy Spirit for the discharge of its duties with reference to the world to come.'

These sermons and these passages deserve notice here particularly, because their teaching moulded the young mind of James Thomason. From them it might be inferred, what indeed proved actually to be the case, that he would grow up to be a good Churchman, a follower of the Book of Common Prayer, a religious man of broad sympathies and charitable sentiments; that he would be devoted to missions to the heathen, and that he would ever strive to attain spiritual-mindedness.

Arriving in London during August, 1814, he goes for a month's visit to various friends of Simeon's. Early in the following month, September, he is taken to school at Aspeden (or Aspenden) in Hertfordshire. The coach from Cambridge to London has, among other passengers, a trio consisting of Simeon, Mrs. Dornford and the boy James, her grandson, as far as Buntingford, in Hertfordshire, twenty-two miles distant. Alighting there, they would be met by Mr. Preston and conducted across the beautiful grounds to Aspeden Hall. There they find a palatial building, originally of Tudor architecture, reconstructed during the last century in the Italian

style, with a great court-yard, a noble hall and two spacious wings. Simeon is struck with the magnificence of the house. The boy is led with his grandmother to his own room, and is there solemnly dedicated by Simeon to the Lord. The establishment is arranged for a limited number of boys. Mr. Preston, already mentioned in the last preceding chapter at Little Shelford, has now taken a certain number of pupils at Aspeden, mostly sons of Simeon's friends. Among these are William, eldest son of William Wilberforce, Thomas Babington the son of Zachary Macaulay, young Vaughan who afterwards won renown as a preacher in Brighton, young Malden who became a well-known classical professor[1]. Macaulay's youthful letters, showing how his mind began to grasp the principles of literature and politics, are written from Aspeden Hall. The place was vacated when Mr. Preston obtained preferment to a living in 1825, and remained empty till 1852, when it was pulled down, and a pretty house in the Italian style was built on its site. But pictures of the former house are extant, and some of the oaken panellings of the old hall are attached to the new. The undulating grounds may be seen, where young James with his distinguished school-fellows once roamed; the Westminster pond, so called from being exactly of the same proportions as Westminster Hall, and overshadowed by lime trees—the grand groups of chestnuts—the steep, though round-shaped and grassy hillock, down which

[1] See Cussan's *History of Hertfordshire*, p. 96.

the boys used to glide rapidly in sledges[1]. The old church is to be visited, and the ancient Lady-chapel, with two large pews, in one of which James Thomason would sit with the Preston family, while in the other might be sitting young Wilberforce, young Macaulay and others. In the chancel is the altar-rail, where James must have knelt to receive his first Communion.

After staying here about four years, he is transferred to the care of Mr. (afterwards Archdeacon) Hodson at Stansted in Sussex, near the border of Hampshire. He loses the companionship of Macaulay who had gone to Cambridge, but he gains that of Wilberforce's second son, Samuel, the future Bishop. Mr. Hodson was at that time Chaplain to Mr. Lewis Way who worked hard, together with Simeon, for the conversion of the Jews. Mr. Way lived at Stansted Hall situated in a spacious park, and Simeon was a frequent guest. This house, dating back to the fifteenth century, was reconstructed at the end of the seventeenth century, by a noble family, in the style of the period from James II to Queen Anne. Its elegant character both inside and outside remains unchanged. It was in the hands of more than one noble family, and from its records appears to have been honoured by several royal visits. Mr. Hodson and his distinguished pupils dwelt in a neighbouring house, but they must have been constantly in the park, with its oak forests and its noble avenue of

[1] The present proprietor of Aspeden Hall was himself in one of the sledges.

beech, inhaling the sea breezes from the coast near Emsworth. They worshipped too in the old chapel[1] inside the park, which Mr. Way had recently restored in almost a Jewish style, with an outer court and with the old and new covenants inscribed on marble tablets.

It was not possible for Simeon, who had only his Fellow's rooms at King's College, to receive his godson at Cambridge. But James spent much of his holidays with his grandmother, Mrs. Dornford, there. He certainly went with Simeon on one of the several tours that were made in Scotland, and probably also on the Continent of Europe once when evangelizing efforts regarding the Jews were being made.

Having obtained from the Directors of the East India Company an appointment as writer, that is, as a member of their Covenanted Civil Service in Bengal, James entered their College at Haileybury, near Hertford, in a picturesque and salubrious situation, with a professorial staff of the highest order, and a curriculum embracing not only all the subjects ordinarily taken in English colleges, but also several Oriental languages and some course of Indian history. He distinguished himself, not only in literary subjects, but also in mathematics and political economy. The college course of two years completed, he sailed to rejoin his parents in India. He was accompanied, as they had been on their sailing for India, by Simeon until the ship was being left by the pilot at sea. He arrived at Calcutta in Sept. 1822, being a little over

[1] See *Life of Bishop Wilberforce* (Ashwell), vol. i. ch. i. p. 5.

eighteen years of age. According to the ideas of the present generation he was pressed into the arena of life too fast. Moreover, out of the then total of his years, the first ten had been already spent in India, and the last eight only in England. These latter had, indeed, like so many precious talents, been put to such exceeding good use, that his somewhat premature entry into Anglo-Indian life did not affect his mental and moral growth.

CHAPTER IV

Career in India

In the year 1822, when James Thomason landed in India as a servant of the East India Company, the long proconsulate of the Marquess of Hastings was about to give place to that of the Earl of Amherst. He was doubtless able to remember the India of his childhood, which he had quitted some eight years previously. But all this while a transition stage was in progress. In 1808, when Thomas Thomason the father reached Calcutta, the Empire had not been fully established. Calcutta was the chief centre of authority, but had not yet grown to the status of a real metropolis. But in 1822, when James Thomason the son arrived as a civil servant, the Indian Empire, though not so fully developed as it is now, was yet in essentials established. The Bengal Presidency stretched uninterruptedly from the mouth of the Húghlí to the north-west frontier beyond Delhi, 1500 miles distant. Nothing separated her from the other two Presidencies except either British territory or Native States, the allies and feudatories of the East India Company. The Pax Romana or Britannica had been for the most part settled. The

proverb that not a shot could be fired in anger from Cape Comorin to the Himálaya, without British permission, was nearly though not quite entirely realized. Meanwhile Calcutta, as the seat of imperial authority, was justly asserting its metropolitan position. Such a status naturally reflected itself on the external aspect of the city. The fine architecture of the Government house, built by the Marquess Wellesley, had set an example to private persons and to local magnates, whether official or commercial or professional. Beyond Fort William there expanded the green plain bearing the Mughal name of Mydan. Round the north end of this expanse there stretched a line of houses somewhat palatial in dimensions and design, which caused Calcutta to be styled the city of palaces. The manners of Anglo-Indian society had been, at the beginning of the century, so quaint and old-fashioned that contemporary accounts of them astonish the modern reader. But by this time society had cast off its provincial style, and had begun to assume the airs which befit imperial surroundings. The junction points of highways in the city were still thronged with palanquins calling for fares, corresponding to the carriage stands in the cities of Europe to-day. But along the banks of the broad Húghlí, with the fortifications on one side the river, and the villas with their richly wooded grounds of Garden Reach on the other side, there rolled daily strings of carriages and lines of vehicles, with equipages and liveries of many hues and devices,

when the Anglo-Indians and their families inhaled the breeze at eventide.

Although James Thomason found India almost an empire and died leaving it fully such, yet during his thirty-one years' service he saw changes of magnitude. When he arrived, India was indeed mainly British, with one large exception, and that consisted of the entire basin of the Indus and its tributaries, which was still in Native hands. But in his time the upper part of this region, the Punjab, and the lower part or Sind, were both conquered and annexed. One war, that of Afghánistán, was indeed waged with chequered fortunes. But of it nothing was actually seen within India itself. Some lesser wars occurred there and on the coast of Burma, but these did not seriously agitate the empire. Apart from the warlike work in the country of the Indus, the operations in India were essentially of a peaceful and progressive character, suitable to James Thomason's taste and genius. He saw the British government relieved of the pressure from arms, politics, self-defence, unavoidable aggrandizement, then using its leisure and freedom for attending to works of peace, and arousing itself to a sense of the responsibilities it had undertaken. He noticed how the government, feeling itself the undisputed master, would dare to deal with evils, or to undertake reforms, that were beyond its power in the days when British ascendency was struggling with many competitors. Thus he witnessed inhuman

rites prohibited, barbarous customs abolished, missionary work liberated from all restrictions, national instruction not only in Eastern but in Western knowledge set on foot, the rational freedom of the press secured, transit duties and their impediments upon inland trade removed, property in land recognized and vested in the mass of the rural people, and irrigation begun on a scale grand enough to enable them to cope with drought and famine. This general category exhausts, perhaps, all the principal improvements of his progressive time which may be regarded as the first generation of civil progress in India. Even this category, however, is limited, and those who think of the improvements which have been or are being made in the country, and which find no place in our narrative, can measure the vast advance during the generation immediately after him.

All this while he knew no other master than the East India Company, whose servant he remained to the end: for at the time of his death that imperial corporation, though really approaching an unforeseen termination, was still in the zenith of success and usefulness.

He was destined to see no less than six Governors General after entering the public service. At his early age he would not be brought much into contact with the first of these, the Earl of Amherst. But he could not fail to notice with admiration the next, namely, Lord William Bentinck, in whose secretariat

he served more than once, and from whose reforming mind he doubtless drew inspiration. He would not see much of the immediate successor, Lord Auckland, with whose pre-occupations in Afghánistán he felt little concern. As will be presently shown, he was intimately acquainted with Lord Ellenborough. He was greatly pleased with Lord Hardinge, from whom, during the scanty leisure afforded by warlike events, he obtained sanction for some of his most important projects. With the last of the six, the Marquess of Dalhousie, he also cultivated friendship, and died under his régime.

As he stepped from the East Indiaman to the strand of the Húghlí, he was young and extremely tall, with abundant brown hair, fair complexion, grey-blue eyes and regular features; the general type being Anglo-Saxon. He had a modest demeanour and winning manners, with an aspect which the Natives would ascribe to high caste. When to this were added a thoroughly sound education, intellectual endowments, and a paternal name most favourably and honourably known in Calcutta—discerning persons could foresee that he would rise rapidly in life, and that many a powerful hand would be stretched forth to help him in mounting the steps of the ladder.

Thus he landed at Calcutta on September 19th, 1822, as a Covenanted Civil Servant on the Bengal establishment. He found his family in Calcutta; his father being at the post of sacred duty, and his

mother being a suitable help-mate, a veritable Dorcas in good works. He had to spend a short time in the College of Fort William studying the Oriental languages, and then was attached to the judicial branch of the administration. In 1825, his mother's health failed and his father accompanied her on a sea-voyage towards England. Mrs. Thomason died at sea, leaving the widower to proceed home alone. There is extant a touching letter from the father to the son on this bereavement. Soon afterwards James also fell ill in India, and proceeded to England on leave. He travelled in the North of England and in Scotland as far as Edinburgh in company with his sister Eliza (afterwards Mrs. Hutchinson). During this journey he wrote several letters to his little sister Frances, (afterwards Mrs. Montgomery) then at Balham in Surrey. These letters indicate a lightness of spirit, and an exhilarating playfulness of which the outer world hardly deemed him capable. Then he joined his father at Cheltenham, and there became engaged to Miss Grant with whom he had been long acquainted, and who was about proceeding to join her family in India. After sojourning in England his father married again and returned to Calcutta. Meanwhile the son also had returned to Calcutta and met his father and step-mother on their landing. They proceeded up country, that is, on to the interior of Bengal, as James was about to be married to Maynard Eliza, above mentioned, one of the daughters of Mr. William Grant of the Covenanted Civil Service, stationed at Maldah. This

Mr. Grant belonged to the Grants of Elchies near Elgin[1], and was related to the Charles Grant who had been an early leader of missionary effort, and among the founders of the Church Missionary Society,—also to the Charles Grant who became Lord Glenelg. He had both musical and pictorial talent. The marriage took place at Maldah, in the lower Gangetic valley, on February 19th, 1829. Thomas Thomason the father, though in bad health, officiated as clergyman at the ceremony, as appears from the expressions in a letter: 'After going so far to unite my son and daughter in marriage, I feared to be removed from them before the ceremony was performed.' The sick pastor hastened back to Calcutta for medical advice, and learned that he was affected by a dangerous disease, namely, water on the chest. He immediately sailed for England, but accomplished his voyage as far as the Mauritius only, where he died during June, 1839; having on his death-bed sent the following message to Simeon: 'Say I feel unworthy of the great love he has at all times honoured me with. Oh! may his bow abide in strength.'

James Thomason receives at Calcutta the tidings of his bereavement. He addresses to his orphan sister Frances, still at school at Balham in Surrey, a beautiful letter regarding the traditions bequeathed to them by their father and mother. He writes:—

'That we ever had such a father is a mercy for which we

[1] To this stock belonged Sir Robert Grant, the author of several hymns well known for their beauty.

can never be sufficiently thankful; that we have lost him is sorrow to us, but joy to him. Happy indeed is their case to whom death is the cause of joy! You have had a mother and a father who were infinitely more happy in their deaths than they ever could be in their lives. . . . You have a mother's example before you, a brighter one you will look for in vain . . . Be your mother's daughter in all the graces of the Christian character . . . You have read Cowper's lines on seeing his mother's picture, and remember those beautiful verses:—

> "But higher far my proud pretensions rise,
> The son of parents passed into the skies."'

He assumes the guardianship of her in the gentlest terms, begs her to look to him as if he were her father, and assures her of a welcome to his home in India as soon as she shall be old enough to come. Three years later he writes at some length regarding her cabin in the coming voyage, enjoining her to make the cabin, what he ever found it to be, a place of delightful retirement—for she will have much to reflect upon regarding her entrance into society in a strange land. The considerate thoughtfulness of his advice, as conveyed to her in several letters, is indeed noteworthy, as emanating from one who was intensely pre-occupied by work in an alien language amidst an eastern people.

By 1829 he had, as a young man of the highest promise, gained extraordinary distinction in some of the most arduous paths of learning. The Bengal Presidency was not then, as now, divided into several Lieutenant-Governorships—but the whole of the vast

Presidency, consisting of Bengal proper, the North-Western Provinces and other territories, was governed directly by the Governor-General and his Council. For this Presidency there was a Court styled Sadar or the chief appellate tribunal, with several European Judges. It was the central repository of Native law. To this Court young Thomason was appointed Registrar. In the course of five years he acquired such proficiency in Muhammadan law, that by his own request he was publicly examined. Among his examiners were Ouseley, who bore a name famous in Oriental learning, and William Hay Macnaghten, who himself composed abstracts of Muhammadan and Hindu law, and who afterwards was signalized by his ill-fated though honourable end in the first Afghan War. They reported that he showed 'intense application and extraordinary talent.' He read before the native law-officers a passage from the Hedaya or sacred law, in Arabic, and explained to them its meaning in Persian. His studies were further extended to Hindu law, and for that he had to learn Sanskrit. Proficiency like his, in two such different and indeed opposite languages as Arabic and Sanskrit, is almost unique in Anglo-Indian records.

After this distinguished service under the Sadar or Chief Court, he was appointed to act for a time as Judge in the Jungle Mahals or districts. This was great promotion for so young a man ; but then, as the name implies, the climate was bad and doubtless caused the sickness that drove him to England in

1827. Returning from his sojourn in England with restored health, he became Secretary to Government in 1830, and remained in that position, enviable as it was for a comparatively young officer of under ten years' standing, till 1832. Then he took the decisive step in his official life, for reasons honourable to him and practical in their nature. He obtained the appointment of Magistrate and Collector of Azamgarh in the Upper Provinces. This change governed the remainder of his career. When he left the Secretariat the President of the Council, Sir Charles Metcalfe, afterwards the celebrated Lord Metcalfe, communicated to him publicly the thanks of the Government.

The transfer might not at first sight appear advantageous to him. He was to relinquish a dignified and lucrative position at the capital, in contact with the official chiefs and political leaders of the day, in the centre of every social interest which the headquarters of a great country could afford, with every attractive advantage that his family could enjoy. All this he was to exchange for hard work and severe routine in a remote district of the interior, as a collector of revenue, as a director of police, as a sitting magistrate, and this too without any gain in emolument. But the reasons which actuated him were years afterwards expressed thus by an excellent authority[1]:—

'It is not in the Secretarial bureau alone, or in the private study, that administrative capacity is to be gained. The

[1] Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Muir, *Calcutta Review*, December, 1853, vol. xxi.

views of enlightened officers may thus be thoroughly mastered, and valuable notes and memoranda may be multiplied. But no study will supply the place of personal experience; and so long as an officer has not himself mixed with the people, and come into immediate contact with them, as their District Officer, his opinions cannot, properly speaking, be called his own, since they are grounded, not upon personal observation but upon the reports of others.'

In Thomason's view the cardinal matter is this, that the European officer should be accustomed to walk alone in his responsibility and to stand on his own basis; should see, think and act for himself and be answerable for the result. For anyone who has passed through this ordeal, the Secretariat of the Government is a most favourable sphere. His practical knowledge is utilized by the Government, his ideas expand, his qualities become appreciated by the dispensers of fortune. But for one who begins life as Under-Secretary, and so rises to be Secretary, without having gone through the practical ordeal, the Secretariat is an unfavourable sphere. He becomes skilful in interpreting and expressing the thoughts of others. But after all, the thoughts are not his, and he is not responsible for the consequence if they are carried into effect. And there is always a fear lest men, who have passed brilliantly through the serene air of the Secretariat, should fail if transported into the lower atmospheric strata, with all the troublous gusts of practical life. This was just the danger and this the temptation, to which the career of Thomason was

exposed after its auspicious beginning. Therefore he resolved to embark on a fresh enterprise and to plunge into the stream with all its eddies and currents.

According to the then modes and means of locomotion, Azamgarh was far removed from Calcutta. The distance, five hundred miles, may not seem long to-day by railway, but at that time it was very tedious by pinnace, by river steamer, by palanquin. Geographically the district may be described as lying near the north bank of the Ganges to the east of Benares. It adjoined the western border of Behar, and was one of the most easterly of the districts included in what were then known as the Upper Provinces. In after years Thomason wrote of it thus to his children, 'It was to me a field of victory, where such repute and status as I had in the service was founded,' but he added 'how far short have I fallen in the fulfilment of God's will.'

CHAPTER V

Life as a District Officer

We are now to follow James Thomason for several years, 1832 to 1837, in his life as a District Officer at Azamgarh. In the high station to which he afterwards rose, he doubtless looked back on that epoch as his golden age. He then had his wife and children with him. When he marched about in tents during the cold season, she sang to him airs from Handel and took the harp with her to beguile his evenings with music.

A most competent witness thus wrote of him:—

'To his residence at Azamgarh he always reverted with delight: and as he visited it in his annual tours, the memory of domestic happiness and official usefulness could be traced in the glistening eye and the mingled sympathies which lighted up his countenance or cast a shadow across it[1].'

Later on he had to draw up a report for his superiors to which he prefixed the following description of the district:—

'It is bounded on the west by the Oudh territories, on the north by the river Gogra and district of Gorakh-

[1] William Muir, *Calcutta Review*, vol. xxi. p. 478.

pur, and on the south and east by the river of Benares. The country is generally low, with water near the surface, and abounding in large jheels or lakes. It is traversed from west to east by several rivers or streams, all of which take their rise from lakes situated either in the district itself or in Oudh, at a short distance to the west, between the Gogra and the Gúmti, and fall into the Ganges. Two of these are navigable during the rains, whilst the others are never navigable; but are highly valued for the irrigation which they extensively supply. The soil is generally fertile and peculiarly adapted for the cultivation of the sugar-cane.'

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'The chief natural products of the district are sugar, indigo, and opium. Comparatively little grain is grown in the district, seldom sufficient for the support of the whole population, which is partly dependent upon importation from the neighbouring district of Gorakhpur, or from Behar, or the Western Provinces. The river Gogra is the general channel for these importations. Grain markets are established all along the course of this stream, and the supplies are thence poured in, as necessary, to all the manufacturing towns in the district. Sugar is the staple produce. It is cultivated throughout the district, and always yields a high rent.'

Such was the district on which he entered at a critical moment in its local history, for the Thirty Years' Settlement was being introduced. He found that the lands of the whole district were being surveyed parish by parish, with a professional and scientific survey after the English method, and field by field with a rough cadastral survey after the native Indian system; that upon these measurements the land

revenue was being assessed for a term of thirty years; that property on the land having thus been recognized as belonging to a vast number of virtual proprietors, a Record of Rights had been undertaken which was to serve as a complete registration of all landed tenures. This special work of the Settlement was apart from the ordinary and regular work of the District, but he was appointed Settlement Officer as well as District Officer. He was now quite in his element; he could think, enquire, learn to his heart's content; all such processes, however, were already familiar to him. But there were new functions by him as yet untried; for he could begin to act, to organize, to command. He could also do that for which he must have already felt an innate genius; having informed himself first, he could instruct and educate others. He had several European Covenanted officers under him. His native officials were numerous in all grades; he officially educated them, and carefully brought them forward. With the agricultural affairs and the landed interests, his Settlement work brought him into the closest touch. His daily work, as administrator-general, lay with the magistracy, the police, the prisons,—the municipalities, such as they then were in their infancy,—the public health and sanitation, the local funds and the lesser works of improvement. He noticed the then existing germs of indigenous education. He probed to the very bottom the relations of the District Officer towards his work and his people. In his own person, and

with his own hands, he grappled with the realities of the business. Though he was usually bland and benign, yet there are cases which show that, if his lawful authority were resisted, he would enforce it with vigour. Interest in his charge deepened year by year, till he came to regard himself as the thrifty and resourceful steward of an improvable domain. He saw the people not only as they appear in public offices and courts of justice, but also as they are in their villages and in their humble callings at home. He learnt to respect their susceptibilities, to feel for their anxieties and to recognize the difficulties with which they are but too often environed. While vigilant against wrongfulness concealed under plausible masks, he was aware of the insinuations with which natives are sometimes prone to poison the mind of European authority against their neighbours. Few Europeans in power have ever judged natives so considerately or made allowances for them so generously as he. During his rides, drives and walks he would try to catch the tone and feel the pulse of the people. At his headquarters, while living in the official residence, his recreation in the cool hours of the morning or the evening—before or after the indoor business of the day—was to inspect the city or the station, and to devise material improvements. For nearly half the year he would quit his headquarters and march in tents about the district. While riding through the fields, halting amidst the homesteads, lounging in the shade of a spreading tree, or in the vestibule of

his tent, he saw the natives more unreservedly than he could see them at his headquarters, when surrounded by his staff and subordinates.

It was the Settlement branch which gave him most opportunity for profound enquiry into the past history of the tribes and families. His Report, already mentioned, proves that, on this his earliest occasion for enquiry, he caught sight of, and kept steadily in view, the proprietary rights inherent in the sons of the soil. After showing how in an age long past, high-bred invaders had dispossessed the humble aborigines, he states:—

'These invasions of the Rájputs are the foundation of the existing proprietary right in the land. Different tribes located themselves in different spots. The stocks were numerous. . . . But it is not to be supposed that stocks regularly multiplied. Violent changes constantly took place; tribes were swept away by the incursions of foreigners or by the aggressions of their neighbours. . . . The occasional incursions and supremacy of the Musalmân are strongly marked in different parts of the country.'

He presents graphic particulars of feuds, fights, raids, forays, and border disputes—of the fortunes which befell lordly houses, feudal families, and industrious homes—all full of local interest. He states 'these historic facts to illustrate the mode in which the proprietary right was generally exercised and transferred,' and concludes his analysis thus:—

'I have endeavoured to show the origin of private proprietary right in the land and the forms under which it

is at present exercised. I will proceed next to classify these forms and to point out the principal features which characterize them. The proprietary right may rest either in a single individual or in a community of people. The community may divide amongst themselves the profits of the estate, either according to their ancestral shares or according to some arbitrary rule having reference to the quantity of land which each member cultivates.'

These quotations serve as a key to the policy which he pursued afterwards, when governing the whole country.

After discussing the various categories into which the tenures group themselves, he turns to tenant right, and divides

'The non-proprietary cultivators into (1) those having an hereditary and transferable right to hold their land at a fixed rate, (2) those having a right of occupancy at a fixed rate either for a certain term or during their own lives, (3) tenants at will.'

This Report was received with marked approbation by the governing authorities. Fourteen years later (1851) the Court of Directors in London wrote of it: 'This document possesses a more than ordinary interest, involving a scientific and discriminating enquiry into the diverse and intricate landed tenures.'

It has been truly said that his administration of the Azamgarh district was 'the miniature' of his government of the North-Western Provinces. He had now acquired that self-reliance which was to sustain him hereafter with a strength that nothing

else could impart. As a Governor he will be endowed with an advantage which Governors do not always enjoy, in that he will call upon others to do only that of which he understands the doing, because he has himself done it.

During these years he found opportunities to march through the neighbouring Native State of Oudh. Though observant of its faults and shortcomings, he hesitated to pronounce against it in unmeasured terms, and was chary in accepting Native reports of an adverse character, lest they should be given partly in order to flatter him by a comparison favourable to British rule. Herein he showed cautious discrimination, as well as generosity in judgment, respecting Native princes and chiefs.

At this time (1836) the Upper Provinces had been formed into a separate Government, with the name of the North-Western Provinces, under a Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe, with his headquarters at Agra. Early in 1837 Thomason was appointed Secretary to the Agra Government.

During his life at Azamgarh, his wife had been continuously with him, and their children were now seven in number[1]. On the eighth anniversary of their marriage, 1836, he indites to her a passage couched in language of grace and beauty. *Inter alia*, he writes, 'seven years of uninterrupted happiness are

[1] Of these several will be mentioned in the succeeding chapters. One only is surviving, General Charles Simeon Thomason, of the Royal Engineers, now residing at Náini Tál, in northern India.

a blessing denied to many.' Further on he proceeds: 'If there has been laid up a plenteous store of faith in God's word, the impulse we now receive will carry us through the gloomier portion of our course that yet remains to be run.'

Despite the avocations of them both, her domestic cares, and his official duties, there had been a thorough companionship between them. Her bringing up, like his, had been earnestly religious. They read together passages from divines or other writers upon religion. He used to copy these passages with his own hand into a manuscript book, carefully indexed for her to study, and many of the passages had been suggested by her. For example, Keble's 'Christian Year' having recently appeared the beautiful morning hymn was transcribed; so also were Coleridge's lines on the Mother and her Child; several passages from Sir Matthew Hale, and from divines of the olden time, as Tillotson, Hooker, Hooper, Fuller, Leighton, Jeremy Taylor, one or two translations from Fénelon, and extracts from other authors, exclusively on religious subjects. About this time, on the occasion of his birthday, he writes in this book of hers some reflections of his own, from which one or two sentences may be quoted, as they illustrate his mode of thinking.

'It is a solemn thought that as life advances and ties multiply which bind the anxious soul to earth, so does the time hasten on when all these ties must be dissolved, when the spirit must part from all the objects of its care and

solicitude upon earth, and present itself before its Judge to render an account of the manner in which it has acquitted itself of the duties devolved upon it. . . . In the hour of health, in the day of prosperity, in the sunshine of happiness, the provision must be made. The season of perplexity, of sorrow and anguish will arrive. We have to prepare not for possible contingency, but for positive certainty.'

In all this there is something unconsciously prophetic. At a time which was the happiest of their lives, he and his wife make mental provision for misfortune. They both know that the closest ties must sooner or later be sundered, though neither foresees that for them the severance is to come soon. Indeed, it is difficult, within a reasonable compass, to do justice to this manuscript book, which well illustrates the God-fearing, humble and diligent disposition of two persons who had all the temptations of worldly success to distract them

Here he receives his sister Frances, who has been noticed in the last preceding chapter, on her arrival from England, having written to her, 'my heart beats in happy expectation of seeing you amongst us.' He gives her in marriage to Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert) Montgomery of the Civil Service[1]. After the wedding is over he writes that he will no longer think of her 'as the trembling blushing bride, but as the matron—the companion of her husband in his wandering—the staff on which he rests in his

[1] She died at Allahábád in 1842. He married in 1845 Ellen, daughter of W. Lambert, Esq., of Surrey. He died in 1888; she is still surviving.

sorrow—the object on which he fixes his regards in his happiness.' His letters to her abound with allusions to the blessings of his own happy house, to the greetings with which his family acclaim him on his return from camp, to the pealing of their laughter in the shady grove. As he is about to quit the district for a higher post he writes, 'Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, for old Azamgarh!'

Leaving Azamgarh for Agra, he is accompanied by his wife and children, or their little flock, as she calls them. Though their journey is, according to her account, managed with every comfort or luxury, yet fever and even small-pox cross their path. Arrived at Agra, she forgets these passing troubles at the sight of her children recovering, and begins to look around her. The ruins, as regards both form and colour, strike her, as they have always struck new-comers from the Lower Provinces. She has an eye for artistic effect, having inherited that faculty from her father. She is amazed at the marble of the Táj, and the gorgeous variety of inlaid stones. Altogether her view of their new home is cheerful; but the cheerfulness is for a moment interrupted by an accident to her husband from his horse falling while he is inspecting the ruins in company with his young son James. This mishap causes a permanent injury to the left leg, and renders him slightly lame. However he soon recovers up to a certain point, and writes—'Wife well—children smiling—what more can I expect?' His high standing in the service is a

source of pride to her, but her happiness is short-lived. The following year, 1838, she begins to show signs of a disease affecting the chest. Late in the summer of that year he takes her to Simla; then a Himálayan station beginning to be established. It is here that he first perceives the peril which threatens to leave their young family motherless.

The following spring, 1839, he decides to send her home, and the children with her. He obtains leave from the Agra Government to go with them as far as Calcutta, where they are to meet his sister Eliza and her husband Major Hutchinson of the Bengal Engineers. Thence they are to proceed all together in an Indiaman round the Cape of Good Hope to England. From Agra he arranges a voyage, tedious but suitably calm for his sick wife, down the Ganges in a spacious boat. She whiles away the hours by reading the manuscript book with its devotional passages already mentioned. Arriving at Calcutta and meeting the Hutchinsons, who afford the best of escort for the voyage, she might it was hoped proceed, and he might return to Agra as his leave would soon expire. But she is so prostrated that he cannot bear to let her go on without him. Therefore he obtains leave to proceed with the ship so far as the Cape of Good Hope, thence to return to Calcutta, for that was the then limit of the East India Company's authority in respect of leave to its officers. He takes this opportunity in the hope that she will improve before reaching the Cape. Arriving there, however, he sees her no

better, but on the contrary worse. Officially he is bound to return to India, and allow her to proceed on the voyage to England, especially as she can be attended to by his sister and her husband, who fortunately are on board[1]. Personally he is anxious to accompany her to England: but he can do so only by proceeding without leave, and so breaking the rules of the service, which infraction, almost unheard of, would cause forfeiture of appointment in India, and perhaps even loss of his place in the service of the East India Company. Such considerations must have been cogent with him, in respect to his responsibilities as the bread-winner of a young family. Yet he runs the risk and proceeds with his sick wife, in the belief that he is sacrificing his career, and forfeiting his place in the Indian Service, with the doubtful prospect of earning a livelihood for himself and his family how he can, and where he may. Landing on the bank of the Thames, he proceeds with her to Blackheath, and alights at the house of his sister Esther, Mrs. Stephen[2]. Staying there for a while she is able to drive quietly in a pony carriage and to join the circle in the evening. She inscribes in a friend's album Keble's lines in the 'Lyra Apostolica' on the text—'Whither I go thou canst not follow Me now.' These lines she seems to consider suitable to her present state as 'a pilgrim pale with Paul's sad

[1] Happily Mrs. Hutchinson is still surviving, and from her account is derived this part of the narrative.

[2] Widow of Major Stephen, related to Sir James Stephen.

girdle bound.' Then her husband places her in Southwick Street, near Oxford Square, London, in the trust either that the progress of the disease may be checked, or that the end may by gentle care be long delayed, even if recovery be never attained—hoping perhaps against hope, as men are wont to be sanguine regarding those who are nearest to them. After that he betakes himself to the Court of Directors and throws his case on their clemency, in reference to the distressful necessity under which he has been labouring. They decide that he shall be relieved from the forfeiture to which the breaking of his leave had rendered him liable, and that he shall be restored to their service. But he must return to India immediately.

His wife on parting entrusts to him two of her unmarried sisters, whom he takes with him to join their relations in India; while the remaining sister stays in charge of her[1]. By this time the overland route through Egypt has been established.

On his departure, she and her sister remained in Southwick Street. As the autumn advanced, and winter approached, her chest complaint became aggravated. The anguish alleviated, she was able to speak much, and then was seen the power of Religion in the supreme moment. She would remember what the poor have to bear in similar trials, and would contrast her own comforts and luxuries, as she called them,

[1] Isabella Grant, who married her cousin and is still surviving as Mrs. Grant of Wester Tambreck, Strathspey. From her is derived this part of the narrative.

with their hardships, as a reason for cheerful patience on her own part. She evinced all the sweetness and fortitude that spring from faith. Speaking of her husband she said, 'Ours was an ideal happiness. You do not know what he has been to me; he is my all [1].' Her mind at ease regarding the future arrangements for the children, she asked that the sixth chapter of Galatians [2] might be read to her. She heard with dying ear of the 'Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.' Next she begged that the fifth chapter of Corinthians II might be read, and was still able to hear that, 'we are confident and willing to be absent from the body, and be present with the Lord.' As the end drew nigh, the seventh chapter of Revelation was read; the tenth verse was reached, and while the words 'our God which sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb,' were being pronounced, there came a sudden pressure of her hand, and then stillness for ever.

She is buried in the churchyard of Charlton near Woolwich, on an eminence characteristic of Kentish scenery, and overlooking Greenwich Park with the Thames. The ridge is now built over with houses, and the noble elm-grove of those days has disappeared. It is close to Blackheath, and Thomason, when recently staying there, doubtless saw the shady

[1] This is recorded by her sister.

[2] It will be seen hereafter that Thomason on his death-bed asked that this chapter might be read to him because it had been read to her on this occasion.

spot. On her tombstone is the inscription that 'surrounded by everything that could make life dear to her, she was enabled to resign all that she might be found with Christ.' Close by is buried Spencer Perceval the Prime Minister, who was killed in 1812.

The tidings of death reach her husband in Bombay. On the voyage out he had written several letters to the children as well as to the mother; these are full of playful and cheery descriptions of places and people, suitable to the entertainment of the young; he had seen Athens and the isles of Greece on his way to Egypt; he wishes he could but take a peep at the domestic hearth which had been set up in Southwick Street. But now he writes to the motherless family in terms the most pathetic, yet the most judicious, showing a perfect knowledge regarding the disposition of each one of them. He reverts to the manuscript book which was begun at Azamgarh, fills up the blank leaves with additional entries, and specially marks those entries which had been suggested by his late wife. Then he sends this book for the instruction of the children, so that they may know 'the passages on religious subjects, to which the parents had in their joint lifetime most attended.'

He has to control from a distance the education of his young family, who are placed under the care of his sister Esther. His private letters, still extant, written month after month in the midst of arduous work, abound with thoughtful suggestions. He addresses many letters to the children themselves,

telling them to 'gather' in imagination round his chair, and hear his words. To one he writes that he used to be 'quite overcome by her clinging affection while she was with him, and that her wailing on his departure still rings in his ears.' He is, in the first instance, cheered by the society of his two sisters-in-law. But he says that by his bereavement 'the home has been shattered—never to be set up again in its integrity;' and in one sense this prediction proves true. His household will be stately and well ordered, but will never know any mistress until his daughters shall have grown up in England and come to join him in India.

Starting from Bombay with his late wife's two sisters as already mentioned, he travels by palanquin at the rate of thirty miles a day to Allahábád, some 600 miles distant. The party start in the lightest marching order as regards luggage, still they require upwards of seventy men to be collected at intervals of twenty miles all the way, including torch-bearers for the nocturnal journey. This wearisome travel leads him over the bold and rugged scenery of the Western Ghát mountains, across the cotton-fields of Berar and Nágpur, through the forests of the Sátpura range, across the Narbadá to Jabalpur, and on to Allahábád, where he is received by his sister Frances, and his brother-in-law Montgomery.

Returning to Agra early in 1840, he reverts to his appointment as Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces. He takes a house of which

he writes—remembering the joyous circle that once surrounded him—that he is 'to be the sole inhabitant.' He has to fill it with the furniture which he and they had left behind them just a year previously. But the sight of this furniture brings sadness: 'The same chairs on which we sat, the same tables round which we clustered, the same pictures on which we gazed, the bookshelves, even the footstools the same. What is the principle which makes one cling so tenaciously to objects that cannot but inflict pain? I would not for any sum part with one article, and yet can I look upon them, and be otherwise than sad?'

He finds that Sir Charles Metcalfe had retired at the end of 1837, that Lord Auckland, though Governor-General, had assumed for a while the direct administration of these Provinces, and that afterwards Mr. Robertson had been appointed Lieutenant-Governor. He served in the Agra Secretariat till the close of 1841, when he became a Member of the Revenue Board in succession to Robert Merttins Bird; and it was a red-letter day in the calendar of northern India when these two eminent persons met at the Board's headquarters, at Allahábád.

His intercourse indeed with Bird, which had long been intimate, was at this time noteworthy as supplying a special example to the public service. He writes thus in a private letter at Agra:—

'Mr. Bird stayed with me nearly a week. I enjoyed his visit greatly, and I trust it was for the good of both. I never found him so instructive or communicative on those

subjects, which regard another world. We had much most interesting conversation, and endeavoured more especially to consider how we should carry out our Christian principles into our daily walk as public servants. It is an important subject, on which as each year passes we should more earnestly reflect.'

When starting from Agra, with its peerless architecture, for Allahábád, which was comparatively plain, but was Montgomery's station—Thomason writes to his children. He wishes to impress them with the superiority of moral loveliness over the beauties of nature and of art. So he says,—'What are the marble structures, the swelling domes against the azure sky, the imperial ruins to me, as compared with my brother-in-law's hearth and the juvenile circle that surrounds it.'

In the beginning of 1842, he was at Calcutta, and witnessed the arrival of Lord Ellenborough as Governor-General. He was immediately sent for by His Lordship, who spoke to him in the most kind and complimentary terms, and had evidently heard of his fame. He was afterwards appointed Foreign Secretary, and so filled an office held to be one of the most dignified and interesting in the country, being commonly called 'the blue ribbon' of the Indian service. He wrote privately:—'My attitude is one of a disciple, and my business is to give currency to the thoughts of others rather than to express my own.' Again he wrote:—'Lord Ellenborough is exceedingly affable and considerate to me. He allows me the fullest access and unreserved communication.' His semi-official corre-

spondence with the Governor-General is still extant, and shows how fully he enjoyed the confidence of his Chief.

In the spring of 1842, his sister Frances (Mrs. Montgomery, who was adorned with all the matronly graces of her mother and sisters) died at Allahábád of small-pox. The twelfth chapter of Hebrews was read at her bedside—'we are compassed by so great a cloud of witnesses'—and he prayed with her. Later in the year, while on a journey, he writes to Montgomery:—

'I thought of you yesterday when our Church directed the attention of all her followers to the 20th Psalm—"the Lord hear thee in the day of trouble—send thee help from the sanctuary."'

Towards the close of 1843 he was, after the retirement of Mr. Robertson, appointed to be Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, by Lord Ellenborough, who on this account deserves the public gratitude. He was a young man for so high an office as this, being thirty-nine years of age and having twenty years' service. He proceeded from Calcutta to Agra in November and found that Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Clerk, who was then in charge, would not make over the government till early in December. He employed the interval profitably in visiting the sites of the proposed Canal works on the Ganges near Hardwár. In the language of the Gazette, the Honourable James Thomason assumed charge of the Government of the North-Western Provinces as Lieutenant-Governor on Dec. 12, 1843.

CHAPTER VI

The North-Western Provinces

To geographers the North-Western Provinces of to-day, as forming a component part of the Indian Empire, differ considerably from the North-Western Provinces of Thomason's time. At that time they comprised the Delhi territory, that is, the territorial appanage lying to the west of Delhi, the imperial city. In them were included the Narbadá territories, meaning the beautiful valley of the Narbadá lying between the mountainous ranges of the Vindhya and the Sátpura. But they did not include the valuable territory of Oudh, which was still a Native kingdom. Since that time, however, Oudh as a British province has been added to them; while the Delhi territory and the Narbadá territories have been taken away; the former having been incorporated in the Punjab, the latter in the Central Provinces. It will suffice here to take a bird's-eye view of the North-Western Provinces as they were in 1843, and as Thomason saw them when entering on his new duties as Lieutenant-Governor.

These Provinces still formed part of the Bengal Presi-

dency, though in respect of the civil administration they had in 1835 been cut off from Bengal, and had been placed under a separate government of their own. Sir Charles (afterwards Lord) Metcalfe was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor with his capital at Agra. Before the Mughal Empire the seat of Moslem power was never at Agra, but always at Delhi. It was Akbar the Great who founded this Mughal Empire and set up his throne at Agra. It was chosen to be the first British Capital of the North-West Provinces, but some thirty-five years ago the headquarters were transferred to Allahábád.

Thomason now found himself placed over territories extending from the 21st to the 23rd degree of north latitude, and from the 77th to the 88th degree of east longitude, including about 100,000 square miles: with a population of about twenty-two millions: the average density being 220 to the square mile; the southern tracts being sparsely populated, while the middle portion, or immediate valley of the Ganges, was densely peopled. If he did not foresee he may have hoped that the population would multiply under the régime to be established by him: certainly the twenty-two millions of his time have to-day grown to more than thirty millions.

The kingdom of Oudh, a Native State, ran into the heart of these Provinces like a great wedge. Imperial Delhi, with its territory then belonging to these Provinces, stretched far westwards towards the river Sutlej. A hilly tract to the south across the

Vindhya mountains, and the Narbadá valley to the Sátpura mountains, belonged to these Provinces as a sort of adjunct. On the north was the Himálayan region of Kumáun and Garhwál. Irrespective of the Vindhyan tract, and the Himálayan district, both mountainous, the main and central portion of these Provinces, under Thomason's government, may be geographically described as the plain of Hindustán or the upper basin of the Ganges.

Of all the names in Indian geography Hindustán is the most famous. In it were established the head-quarters of the Mughal Empire, and thus it became the Empress Province of India. During the middle ages, the name Hindustán came to be applied by many to India itself. In the present century it has been limited correctly to the upper basin of the Ganges, as contradistinguished from the lower basin in Behar and Bengal. Even with this limitation it was, on Thomason's accession to the government, the most important territory in India, though during recent years it may in romantic interest have yielded to the Punjab. It contained Delhi and Agra, cities among the most beautiful in India, even in Asia; the classic of some among the loftiest triumphs achieved by Moslem arms and policy,—Hardwár, the classic spot where the Ganges as a young giant debouches from the Himálayas into the wide plains, and where Hindu pilgrims swarm periodically to bathe—Benares, the venerated centre of Hindu faith and learning.

Thus the eyes of Thomason, as he entered upon his new charge, would be greeted by an amazing variety of scenery. Beginning at the extreme north-east he finds primaeval forests, ancient and widespreading groves, impenetrable thickets, and rank marshy vegetation requiring drainage. Proceeding westwards he traverses the Doáb, or Mesopotamia of the Ganges and the Jumna; the broadest sheet of cultivation in all India, and the great wheat-producing tract. This champaign is in summer one dreary expanse of drab and yellow ochre tints, studded continuously with villages of the same hues, and dotted here and there with trees or groves. In the winter it puts on, so to speak, a garb of verdure from the rising crops. Advancing still westwards and crossing the Jumna, past the wealth and prosperity of Delhi the new, in juxtaposition with the long extended ruins of Delhi the old, he enters upon the Delhi territory till he approaches the Sutlej. Here he sees naught but a landscape blank and naked, with undulations low and endless, destitute of vegetation and broken only by red sandstone cropping up over the surface of the land. Turning northwards, he crosses the ill-omened Terai, or belt of malarious jungle, which guards the base of the Himálaya. Ascending the mountains, he reaches an elevated plateau where the northern horizon is bounded by a line of snow-clad giants rearing their heads 24,000 feet above sea level. Again crossing the centre of the country just described, on and on towards the southern limit, he perceives the Narbadá, sometimes tumbling in broad cascades

and at one point flowing gently for some miles through cliffs and walls of white marble.

He finds the climate to be as varied as the scenery. In Kumáun the air of Himálayan altitudes is like that of Tyrol in Europe. To the south, in the region of the Vindhya and Sátpura mountains, the heat is mitigated and the winter season is charming. In the eastern part of Hindustán the atmosphere and the ground are moist, somewhat resembling Bengal. In the western part, the case is not only different, but opposite. There is a proverb of the sky as brass, the earth as iron, and the breeze as a blast from the furnace. Here he will realize its truth, for this is the place of all others to which it is most applicable. Fortunately for human endurance, these conditions are of short duration. The rains, periodically descending, cause the earth instantly to deck itself with a verdant carpet. The change is pleasurable to the sensations of mankind, though the physical effect becomes depressing. Then follows a cool autumn, the presage of the bracing winter, or the 'cold weather' in Anglo-Indian phrase. The tempered radiance of sunlight, the unfailing blue of the sky, the breeze blowing over the rising vegetation, the grateful shade of the groves at mid-day, the lengthening shadows in the golden sunset, the sudden cold after nightfall, the frosty nights, the biting rigour of the air at sunrise, the health-giving dryness of the equable temperature, almost unvarying for several months consecutively—render the climate of Hindustán in

winter one of the very finest anywhere for British physique.

The ancient history of Hindustán comprises most of the religious and political developments of the Hindu race. Its modern history shows it to have been, in warlike phrase, 'the cock-pit' of India—owing to the strategic vantage-grounds which it offered, to the unfortunate facility with which it could be over-run, and to the resources in men, money, produce and supplies which it afforded for armed occupation. It thus became the unhappy hunting-ground for every conqueror or devastator; even for every plunderer and marauder who had sufficient force. Its inhabitants though disorganized were not unwarlike, and would never yield themselves and their possessions to the victor without many a blow struck in defence. It was overspread by the several Moslem dynasties, whose power radiated from Delhi. Then it fell under the established sway of the House of Bábar for two centuries, and was the headquarter Province of the Sovereigns who, under the generic name of the Great Mughal, dazzled even the eyes of mediaeval Europe. It ceased for a while to be the theatre of wars; no more battle-pieces were acted on its stage. But it became periodically the scene of the stately marches which the Great Mughal used to undertake in the cold season, to keep his courtiers out of intrigues, and to exercise his unwieldy hordes of armed men. The imperial procession stalked through

the land, as a pageant, carrying in its train a moveable city, from one halting-place to another, to be set up under canvas in each camping ground.

For half a century during the reign of Akbar, the first and greatest of the Great Mughals, the country had enjoyed the best administration ever known in India under native rule, within historic times. Repression of armed injustice, enforcement of equitable procedure, toleration in religion, discouragement of persecuting bigotry, vindication of individual liberty under the bans and prohibitions of custom, moderation in the demand and collection of the land revenue, respect for the proprietary right of the people in the soil—caused the reign of Akbar to be surrounded with a halo that ought not to be dimmed even by the lapse of time. His guide, philosopher and friend, was Abul Fazl the Moslem, a name which stands second only to his own as regards nobility of conduct. But his great minister was a Hindu, namely Todar Mall, whose survey of village lands all over the country, whose assessment of the land tax, and whose registry of rights and interests are to this day remembered. After Akbar's death, this beneficent system went on for a while under his son Jahángír. But it fell off during Jahángír's reign, and still more under that of his son Sháh Jahán. It was restored partially for a time under his son Aurangzeb.

When Aurangzeb, the last of the effectively powerful though not the last of the titular Great Mughals, died at the very beginning of the eighteenth century,

Hindustán became once more the arena of armed violence. Soon the Maráthás arose, worse than any despoilers hitherto known. After waging some deadly struggles with Persian and Afghan invaders, they succeeded in making Delhi a portion of their short-lived dominion in India. But the Moslem ruler of Oudh, and the Rohillás of Rohilkhand maintained independence for a time. Lastly the British East India Company appeared on the scene of action.

As the result of three decisive battles, at Buxár in 1763, at Delhi in 1803, at Fatehgarh in 1805, and the storming of the Aligarh arsenal in 1803, the East India Company became the mistress of Hindustán and its dependencies. These territories were consolidated under the designation of the Ceded and Conquered Provinces in 1806. Some further additions were yet destined to be made; for in 1816 the war with Nepál ended by the cession of the Himálayan tract of Kumáun and Garhwál; the Pindárí War in 1818 caused the accession of the Narbadá valley; and in 1832 the Delhi territory, already under the control, was brought under the direct administration of the British.

The aborigines of Hindustán had, many centuries previously, given place for the most part to Aryan immigrants from Central Asia, who became noted in history as the Hindus, divided into the well-known castes. Remnants of the aborigines survived everywhere as the lower castes; otherwise territorially and socially the tribes of pure origin, the

priestly Bráhman, the chivalrous Rájput, the clerkly Kayásth, held the field for the most part. Side by side with them were lesser castes, such as the brave and industrious Jats, and the predatory though reclaimable Gujars. Here and there, too, the Moslems still clung to the soil. The Bráhman soldiery, who were commonly called Hindustáni, did not generally come from Hindustán, but rather from Oudh.

These various wars and inroads were indeed enough to lay waste or permanently desolate Hindustán; but fortunately such was not the result. Though the outlying portions were so maimed and injured as to be much less cultivated and inhabited than they are nowadays; yet in the middle region between the Ganges and the Jumna, the dominant interest, that of agriculture, was sustained by 'The Village Communities.' This famous institution still attracts the attention of political philosophers in Europe, and a complete literature has grown up around it. A community of this description consisted of large bodies of shareholders, all descended from a common ancestor holding the lands of their parish or township in commonalty or severalty, with a defensive union among themselves; jointly responsible for the land tax demanded from their township by the ruling power, and electing their representatives to deal on their behalf with the officers of the Government. These Communities were to be found throughout the country, and a goodly part, though not the whole, of the lands were in their keeping. All Britons remember cases where splendid and

gallant cavalry would advance against steady and sturdy infantry. The infantry would form themselves into squares, the artillerymen would for the instant leave their guns and betake themselves to the interior of the nearest square. The storm of cavalry sweeps on in vain and retires beaten; the infantry remains unbroken; the artillerymen return to their guns, and serve them against the retreating foe. The effect of the Village Community in time of trouble or trial was precisely similar. Seeing the invader approach, the Community would close its ranks, gather its household goods together, hide or bury its precious records and papers with its little stores and treasure. The work in the fields might be suspended for a while, the blackmail or the contribution required by the oppressor would be forthcoming, and he would ultimately go forth to fresh pastures. At first sight everything might seem to be swept into confusion. But no; the organization of the Community has remained intact; its representatives resume their functions; every shareholder knows his share, if there be any doubt he can refer to the records that have been preserved; he goes back to his accustomed place, rehabilitates his holding, restores his harried fields; and soon order follows on the passing interregnum of disorder.

This peculiar institution is important in this memoir because Thomason as Governor upheld it with all his might. Sir Charles Metcalfe also recorded his opinion on the same side in a passage of remarkable force. It may be well to reproduce some

sentences of Metcalfe's here, on which Thomason used to rely, bearing the date of November, 1830:—

'The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down; revolution succeeds to revolution; Hindoo, Patan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sikh, English, are all masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves: a hostile army passes through the country: the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance; but when the storm has passed over they return, and resume their occupations. If a country remain for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers nevertheless return whenever the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation will return. The sons will take the places of their fathers; the same site for the village, the same positions for the houses, the same lands, will be reoccupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success.

This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India through all the revolutions and changes which they

have suffered. It is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.'

Notwithstanding the advantages offered by the system of Village Communities, the early British administrators in Hindustán were less successful probably than their brethren in some other parts of India. Temporary settlements of the revenue were made in a perfunctory manner; the land tax was collected without proper information of the rights and liabilities of individuals. Originally there was one supervising Board of Revenue at Calcutta for the whole Bengal Presidency, but afterwards a separate Board was allowed for the Upper Provinces. The first man who really tried to effect a reform in these Provinces was Holt Mackenzie in 1822: and he procured the passing of a law which was the precursor of the laws afterwards embodied as the magna charta of the rural people. The next step was taken in 1833 by the Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, in a conclave held at Allahábád, on which occasion proceedings, legislative and executive, were determined, ending in the measure afterwards known to history as the Settlement of the North-Western Provinces.

The task thus undertaken was immense, beyond any of that nature which had been essayed previously in India. The principal points of the country, containing more than seventy thousand square miles, were to be fixed with absolute precision by the Grand Trigonometrical Survey. A scientific

survey was to be professionally made for every one of the 50,000 parishes or townships in the area, to show all the physical features with the acreage of cultivated and waste land. This was to be followed up by a cadastral survey of every field with its acreage measurement, after the native fashion, and with full particulars of its soil, culture and capabilities. Upon the data thus obtained, and after consideration of all the agricultural information that could reasonably be desired, together with the circumstances and history of the inhabitants,—the land tax was to be assessed and fixed on each parish or township for a term of thirty years, so moderately and equitably as to leave to the tax-payers and proprietors a margin sufficient to make their property valuable; on the understanding, too, that within the term they would have the full benefit of all improvements. The taxation thus to be assessed amounted to about four millions sterling annually[1]; the rural population concerned or affected was about twenty millions of souls in number. To all this was to be added a registration of landed tenures with a record of all rights and interests in land.

The man on whom the chief command of this vast operation devolved was Bird, already mentioned as Member of the Revenue Board. It is needful to advert to him here, because he was the forerunner into whose labours Thomason entered; the pioneer, the originator,

[1] Taken at the value of two shillings to the rupee, as it was always assumed and as it was at that time.

the inventor, whose work Thomason took up, carried on to its conclusion, and rendered fully effective. Of Thomason, as of other eminent men, it may be said:—

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona multi.

Among these the greatest, the *fortissimus*, was undoubtedly Bird; he was a born leader of men, and in his day there was no civil officer in northern India equal to him in reputation. By the students of social history in India he is known to have been one of the most capable workers that the East India Company's Service ever produced. One specific notice of him is forthcoming, written by a really competent witness [1], and it may well be quoted here.

'On Robert Merttins Bird devolved the task of directing, for many years, all revenue operations, especially those of the new Settlement. He indeed was a man of no common order.

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'A mind, capable of dealing equally with minute details and general principles; stores of information collected by unusual powers of memory and observation; cheerful spirits and unfailing health; together with a robust energy, the "*vigor animi, ingentibus negotiis par;*" these were his qualifications for the great work which then lay before him. On that work he impressed his own stamp, and gave it all its form and feature. Discordant ideas and conflicting theories soon disappeared before the influence of one controlling intellect. Allowed to select his own instruments, he

[1] *Calcutta Review*, vol. xii. p. 433. The writer was John Thornton, Chief Secretary to Thomason's Government. He had served under Bird.

usually chose young men, as being less encumbered and more manageable than their seniors, and less likely to be imbued with prejudices derived from the dark ages of our earlier administration. With these young officers he kept up constant private intercourse, and thus instilled into them his own views, and animated them by his own hearty temperament. Where he reposed his confidence, he did so without reserve. He received the opinions of those employed under him with respect; looked after their interests, defended their proceedings, and fought their battles as if they had been his own. The result was that in eight years after the enactment of Regulation IX. of 1833, he was able to report to the Government that the Settlement, with some immaterial exceptions, was completed; and that he was at liberty to return to that native land, from which he had been thirty-three years separated.'

There is something pathetic in the closing paragraph of his final report in the beginning of 1842. After stating the contrast between that date and 1830 in 'the administration of the land revenue—the condition of the agricultural population—the feeling of the people—the toil, effort, and anxious care with which this change has been effected;'—he concludes thus, 'I am now about to quit the service, and my only desire is that the good which has been effected may be maintained.' He is evidently apprehensive, but his forebodings would have vanished could he have foreseen that in Thomason's hands the work would be even more than maintained, till it reached its complete fulfilment.

In this Settlement, while the tax-payers were to

have the full benefit of all improvement within the term, it was felt that in the event of severe drought or calamity of season, or other extraordinary misfortune, the Government must share the loss with the people, and that remissions of revenue in such cases must be allowed. Hardly had Merttins Bird completed the Settlement in the Provinces, when this principle was put to an extreme test. The summer rainfall of 1836 almost totally failed in the central and western tracts of these territories. Thereby the harvest of that autumn was ruined, and the sowings for the ensuing spring harvest rendered impossible. The horror of the situation can be realized only by those who know what the earth in that region is after the glaring sun and scorching winds of spring and early summer, and what it becomes if the normal rains of midsummer fail to descend. Some ten to fifteen millions of the population were more or less grievously affected; dreadful distress and widespread mortality ensued; many grain riots and agrarian disturbances occurred. Extensive relief was undertaken by the Government and by charitable agencies. About one million persons were employed in relief works. The total cost of these humane operations amounted to nearly half a million sterling. The effect on the land tax which had just been fixed by the Settlement was still more grave, for about a million sterling of revenue was remitted that year. The rainfall of the following year restored plenty, but the effects of the famine on the people were felt for some time. Out of this evil

some notable good was educed, namely this, that the attention of the Government was forcibly drawn to the necessity of providing artificial irrigation with canal works on a commensurate scale. This became one of the cardinal points in the policy which Thomason pursued as Lieutenant-Governor.

CHAPTER VII

The Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable James Thomason, as Lieutenant-Governor, assumed charge of the government of the North-Western Provinces from Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Clerk, in December, 1843. The constitution of these Provinces as a Lieutenant-Governorship in 1835, was the first instance of the kind that had occurred in British India. The territories, being in the Bengal Presidency, were technically under the government of the Governor-General in Council, whose deputy for actual administration was the Lieutenant-Governor. The Governors of the two Presidencies, Madras and Bombay, being appointed by the East India Directors with the assent of the Crown, were indeed under the supreme authority of the Governor-General, but they were not subordinate to him quite in the same way as the Lieutenant-Governor who had been appointed by him. Nevertheless, the position of the Lieutenant-Governor was sufficiently secure to sustain that independence of thought and of opinion which is essential to the conduct of large affairs. In the first place, almost the entire patronage of the civil government was entrusted to him. But

for nearly all the important offices, the choice must be made from among the Covenanted Civil Servants. The function here was not so much that of patronage as of jealously watched selection. There was indeed a goodly number of appointments open to military officers, to Europeans belonging to what was then styled the Uncovenanted Service, and to Natives of India—in all which cases the power of appointing did in some degree resemble patronage. Below these, in the lesser appointments, which were very numerous and which were open to the Natives, the patronage was vested in the local officers, generally Covenanted Civil Servants—subject always to the control of the Lieutenant-Governor.

His government was almost entirely civil; it had nothing to do with the troops stationed within its territory, or with cantonments, or with forts. The public works, comprising the trunk roads, canals and other large works of irrigation, were not under him, but were managed by a body styled the Military Board. Such were the primitive arrangements of that day for the department of public works, which was indeed in its infancy. Railways and electric telegraphs had not as yet been thought of practically. There was no local legislature in these Provinces. Indeed, the idea of legislative councils had not been formed for any part of India. Legislation had been conceived only as a branch of the executive government of India, and was conducted not at all in public, but in camerâ or inside the cabinet. Nevertheless, there were laws thus framed

by the Governor-General in Council and styled Regulations. They were binding on the Lieutenant-Governor for these Provinces in the main. But they did not apply to his Himálayan district of Kumáun nor to the Narbadá territories described in the last chapter, which were consequently styled non-regulation districts. The Courts of Justice, both civil and criminal, were in their action and decisions independent of him. Still he possessed indirectly much influence in the judicial department, because with him lay the appointment and removal, the leave and furlough, of all judges, under the rules of the service.

Even with these several limitations, the sphere of the Lieutenant-Governor was vast. He had the nomination, or the control over the nomination, to all civil appointments, whether administrative or judicial—the command of the magistracy in all its executive work, of the police, of the prisons,—the supervision of municipalities, of local funds and miscellaneous improvements, of the public health and sanitation, of national education such as there then was, of the post-office which had not yet been erected into an imperial department,—and the administration of the revenues.

The principal head of revenue consisted of the land tax. The administration of it, as sketched in the last preceding chapter, overshadowed in importance all other branches of the civil government. The tax itself touched closely, almost vitally, the welfare of every individual in a vast body of peasant proprietors,

who occupied by far the greater part of the country. Now, to this subject Thomason bent his whole mind. Its prime importance has been recognized by every civil government in India. The task has been prosecuted by a long line of illustrious administrators; all of whom have discharged it effectively, and many have performed it excellently. On the whole, without disparagement of them, we may say that Thomason was the most accomplished administrator of the Land Revenue that has ever been seen in India. In a national race, where so many eminent persons have so nobly striven, as in this, the ultimate winner can win only with a slight advantage; and thus it is with Thomason. He did best that which a great number of able men have done well, and this is an encomium of the highest order—*palmam qui meruit ferat.*

For the management of all these affairs he found an organization ready to hand. The unit of social life was the village, meaning the collection of houses or cottages and the surrounding area, corresponding to an English parish. A large number of villages, several thousand, would be grouped into a district corresponding to an English county—except that the district, having an average population from a million to a million-and-a-half, was larger than a county. Over each district was placed a high official, always European, styled Magistrate and Collector; who had charge of everything in all branches save the judicial branch; and who practically was administrator-general. There

were about thirty-six of these districts in the regulation Provinces, exclusive of the non-regulation territories already mentioned. Then each group of districts was formed into a province, and was placed under a still higher officer, styled Commissioner, who superintended the Magistrates and Collectors, and who locally represented the Lieutenant-Governor; there were six of these Commissioners in the Provinces. Lastly, removed from Allahábád to Agra, was the Board of Revenue, consisting of two or more members.

In his high estate he would primarily think of the masses of the Native population. Now, sympathy with the Natives has ever characterised the Civil Service of India. But this sympathy has been evinced in various ways by different persons. Some have mixed so familiarly with the people as to become versed in their colloquial vernacular, riding, hunting, walking with them in the glaring sunshine, sitting with them under the shade of trees, conversing with them in the cool air of evening or round the watch-fires at night. Such men have acquired genuine popularity with the Natives. Others, without going quite so far as this, have by a hearty, genial, good-humoured manner, together with personal knowledge of local traits and idiosyncrasies, attracted popular regard. Some have happily had occasion by saving life, or mitigating pestilence, or by other deeds of signal beneficence, to raise up a monument to themselves in the Native heart. Some again, by teaching and exhorting, almost

equivalent to ministration, have won affectionate veneration from the people among whom they moved and had their being. These ways are calculated to evoke enthusiasm in various degrees; but they never were quite the ways of Thomason, nor were they akin to his natural temperament. His manner was the same with Natives as with his own countrymen; suave, bland, courteous, calm, somewhat undemonstrative and reserved. His fame among the people must have been great, and the better informed classes knew him to be their steadfast friend. Individual Natives, with lasting gratitude, looked upon him, in their own phrase, as the embodiment of benignity and justice. All nationalities were aware of his ceaseless and philanthropic efforts for the general welfare. But the Natives in the mass hardly had a vivid perception of him as a living personality, around which their regards could cluster, towards which their sensibilities could be drawn. They probably regarded him rather as a benevolent power placed up aloft to watch over the fortunes of the country. Nevertheless, beneath this placid exterior there glowed within him, like vestal fire pure and perpetual, a zeal for the welfare of the Native population. Some rulers have been more or less distracted by political anxieties, by grave emergencies, by events absorbing all available stores of energy; but fortunately he had time uninterrupted and leisure unbroken for cares and avocations purely civil. He was able to think daily from morn to eve on what could or should be done for improving and

elevating the condition of the Natives both mentally and physically. He firmly believed in the possibility of such improvement among all classes, but especially among the lower-middle and the poorer sections of the community. Regarding the latter, he sympathized with their lowly lot, he felt for their griefs, losses and distresses, he rejoiced in their humble joys and their modest prosperity. He was anxious to mitigate their hardships, to render them happier in their homes, to lead them on in the path of peace and pleasantness. He would be the helper of the helpless, the supporter of the weak, the protector of the oppressed. He could put his finger with unerring precision on every one of their faults. But he recollected the temptations which had for ages beset them. He recognized their merits and especially their domestic virtues. He knew indeed that the truest improvement must spring from the people themselves. He thought that crime and other popular faults sometimes arose from unintentional misgovernment, fiscal, executive, or judicial. As a district officer he had often warned his superiors of this. As a superior he would give the same warning to his district officers. But he believed that good government would produce that disposition in the people which leads to self-help and self-improvement.

So he resolved that, by putting his shoulder to the wheel and his hand to the plough, he would, if life were spared to him for a few years, leave his people better far than he found them in wealth and circumstances, in wisdom and understanding. In forming such deter-

mination, in profoundly reflecting on the means of carrying it out, in patiently and perseveringly prosecuting it, he has been rarely equalled, and never surpassed, by any ruler of India.

For such a policy, fitting instruments must be either found by him ready to hand or else laboriously made. He could find few such among the Natives themselves, as they then were in these Provinces; for the misfortunes which during several generations overspread this country, like destructive inundations, had wrecked and ruined most men of the better classes. In the absence of any public instruction there were few Natives of any modern training; such men he hoped indeed to educate and train, but the result could not be obtained yet awhile. Meanwhile he would promote the official training of the European administrators, and would induce them to educate their Native subordinates.

Next after education, one way, he knew, to secure probity and integrity in Native Officials was to improve their status, emoluments and promotion. In connexion with this, he promulgated for them a generous scheme of superannuation in order to afford them an assured prospect in the decline of life.

His own experience had taught him that of all officials the most important were the European Magistrates and Collectors, or district officers. As they were highly placed men of excellent stamp, with an abiding sense of duty and a laudable ambition, they afforded the best material, so to speak, for organi-

zation, and he resolved that they should if possible be trained to the highest point of efficiency. As he had, when himself a district officer, carefully instructed all his subordinates, European and Native, obeying always his superiors, so he would now instruct all the district officers who had come under subordination to him. He justly hoped that, by his practical acquaintance with all details of the work, he would induce them to value his guidance, not only from the necessity of official obedience, but from a sense of loyal obligation. He held that the most important part of their duties related to the land revenue and the various matters connected therewith; which duties were divided into two groups, the first relating to the collection of the land revenue, the second relating to the assessment of the land tax and the registration of landed tenures,—all which bore the generic name of Settlement. He would thoroughly instruct them in each of these main groups separately. His instruction was not to consist merely of isolated directions or of orders issued from time to time; it was to be combined, classified and codified. There were highly qualified Secretaries, of whose talents and knowledge he fully availed himself in a hundred ways. But this work of consolidated instruction he would personally undertake. Accordingly he prepared, mostly with his own hand, two concise though weighty manuals, one entitled 'Directions to Collectors,' the other 'Directions to Settlement Officers.' By these publications he fully set forth

the whole duty of the Officers on the broadest principles and in the minutest details. Moreover he inculcated on them at every turn those maxims which lay nearest his own heart; regarding considerateness and kindness towards the Natives, the guardianship of their interests, the vindication of their rights. The aptitude for toil thus evinced by him was wonderful, when all the while he had the business of a Government to conduct. Even if other Governors anywhere in India could have found the time for such a task, few would have had the eyesight, the skilled workmanship, the literary practice. By these two manuals—which were infinitely useful in their time, lasted for many years, are still valuable, and have formed the foundation for further and newer codes—he erected monuments of official industry, in respect of which no Ruler of India has equalled him. Of all concerns the one which most nearly affects the Indian population is the land revenue; and in regard to this he was the most accomplished professor and the ablest instructor that has yet been seen.

These Instructions, too, in both branches, he began to embody with his own hand in a Revenue Code, which was left unfinished at his death, and as a piece of legislative drafting is masterly.

Certainly his Instructions were announced to be not mere treatises, but manuals for guidance. Yet they were criticized by some as being 'too argumentative and not peremptory enough.' He replied, however, that some discretion must always be left to his officers,

and that he must explain the principles on which such discretion should be exercised. And he added: 'I like better to address myself to the reason of my fellow-servants, than simply to their sense of obedience.'

At that time there were serving under him many men who have subsequently become famous as rulers, and who were really brought up in the great official school of the North-Western Provinces. Foremost among these was John (afterwards Lord) Lawrence, who thoroughly agreed with Thomason's principles and ideas. Next was Sir Robert Montgomery, mentioned in chapter V, who afterwards succeeded Lawrence as Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Another was Sir William Muir, who afterwards became Lieutenant-Governor, then Finance Minister of India, and is now Principal of the University of Edinburgh. Others may be mentioned, Sir George Edmonstone, Sir Donald Macleod, Sir John Strachey, Sir Henry Davies, Sir George Campbell, Sir John Morris, all men of the ruling class by virtue of merit and capacity. To these might be added the names of some who have been distinguished in the cabinet, or in arduous service, or in literature, such as Henry Carre Tucker, John Thornton, Edward Thornton, George Barnes, Charles Raikes, Robert Needham Cust.

When in 1849 the administration of the Punjab was freshly formed under the Lawrences, many of the best and most rising men under Thomason were taken by

Lord Dalhousie for the new Province. Foremost among these was Montgomery, already mentioned. They all carried with them the traditions and the practice of the North-Western Provinces. Then, subject to local exceptions, the Instructions by Thomason were prescribed by the Lawrences for the general guidance of all their officers. To that extent, undoubtedly, his administration did become a pattern for the Punjab. In private letters to Montgomery he writes thus of his departed henchmen: 'It has been a heavy tax. Nineteen men of the best blood! I feel very weak after so much depletion. But the remaining blood will circulate more quickly and healthily—so we shall soon get over it.' Further he makes enquiries, with all his usual thoughtfulness, regarding the goodwill of the upper classes and of the people generally in the recently annexed territories towards their new rulers; particularly adverts to the Village Communities; and suggests caution with forbearance in the introduction of the British system before the upper, the middle and the humble classes shall have had time to realize the change in their political destiny.

While all this instruction was imparted by him to his own districts, Thomason knew that as chief instructor he must personally visit every district, and the principal places in its interior. The only means of effecting this visitation was for him, in Anglo-Indian phrase, to march. The term 'march' is adopted from the army by civilians in India, and it means the same

process,—and when we say that he marched for several months consecutively in almost every year, it is meant that he and his retinue rode daily from ten to fifteen miles, just as troops would march from one encampment to another, dwelling in tents. The first year of his appointment, in 1843, he did not march, because he assumed charge at Agra, shortly before Christmas in that year, that is, in the midst of the marching season; moreover there was war impending in the adjacent territories of Gwalior. Again he refrained from marching during the winter of 1848–9, because at that time the second Punjab war was in vigorous progress beyond his frontier. The resources of military transport were drawn from his territories, and strings of carts with draught bullocks, stretching over an immense length of roadway, were being despatched by his officers to the seat of hostilities. His camp for marching would also need many carts with bullocks, and as the transport had become scarce, he deemed it considerate towards the Natives to refrain from further requisitions of this kind. These two winters excepted, 1843–4, and 1848–9, he set out for the march every year of his incumbency, and he lived to accomplish eight of these annual tours. He thus managed to ride through the various districts under his government about three times, after regular intervals. The dimensions of this achievement may be understood from the fact that from his frontier westward of Delhi to that at Gorakhpur, at the base of the eastern Himálaya, the distance amounted to

six hundred miles from west to east, and four hundred from north to south. His winter's tour was planned some months beforehand, and the approximate dates of arrival were notified to the local authorities. For the convenience of all concerned, he adhered to the proposed arrangements with amazing punctuality, subject only to a day's delay here and there, owing to the wintry showers which casually pour down to refresh the rising crops.

Though his camp was as plain and simple as it could possibly be for a man of his exalted station, yet the array of tents with the spread of canvas was unavoidably imposing; while it was striking in picturesque effect, and the clean white freshness of the movable domicils was pleasantly restful to the eye. The Indian climate renders it necessary that the tents should be lofty, airy and spacious; in no country of the world has tent-making been so handsomely undertaken as in British India; each member of his staff and each of his secretaries had to be provided with one tent or even more. These were pitched in two long rows on the camping ground, as in a street of canvas, and at one extremity were his own tents. His reception tent closed the end of the street; it was a fine long apartment of extensive dimensions, its shelving roof being supported by a row of poles. It was kept for his social entertainments at the civil and military stations through which he passed,

for the reception of the natives on ceremonial occasions, and for the meetings of his officers. In the early days of British rule the progress of the highest authorities on the march was often like a procession, many miles in length, of elephants, camels, horses, carriages, wagons, carts, draught animals, trappings and paraphernalia innumerable; his march was far simpler, still it comprised long lines of transport for the tents, the baggage, the camp furniture, and the selected records.

The refreshment of spirit and the physical invigoration, afforded by these tours, baffle description. For the march the start is at sunrise or even a little earlier, at an hour called 'gun-fire'; and the halt is in the early forenoon. Just before and after the appearance of the sun over the cloudless horizon, the cold is sharp and biting. During the day the sun in the pale-blue sky may strike with his vertical rays. Some degree of heat may be felt inside the tents during the mid-day hours if the camp be standing on open shelterless ground. But this effect is mitigated if it be pitched in any of those umbrageous groves of mangoes or other trees frequently found in many districts. Under any circumstances the dry air, the still drier ground, the fresh breeze sweeping over the young verdure of the rising crops, are delightful and salubrious. The afternoon invites to short excursions in the neighbourhood. The shades of eventide are accompanied by a rapid accession of cold, and the chilly temperature, often followed by frost,

demands that the tents be artificially heated by stoves, and that bonfires for the camp-followers be lighted outside.

Lovelier even than the days were the nights, whether star-lit or moon-lit. Those grateful associations, which cluster round the harvest-moon in England, are in northern India devoted to the moon of November. To the natives this moon tells of one harvest safely garnered and another crop successfully sown, of the rainy season having been fully vouchsafed, and everything set in tune for the coming agricultural year. The beauty of its illumination befits the graciousness of its message. Not in the Isles of Greece, nor on the shores of the Mediterranean, had Thomason beheld such moonlight as that which he enjoyed November after November in Hindustán.

After the week's routine of his camp, there was always a halt for the Sabbath. He had ever enforced the prohibition against prosecuting any public works on that day, in order that the Christian character of the Government might be vindicated before the people. He would himself set a pattern in his own encampment. So on the Sabbath morn all was hushed and quiet, not only in the street of tents, but also in the surroundings, which on other days resounded with the hum and bustle of movement. For this one day man and beast—the men of several creeds and races, the animals of many species—were in repose. But in the forenoon, midway in the

street of tents, the camp gong would begin to toll as a Church bell, and at the appointed hour, the European officers and their families, the guests, the Native Christians in the camp, would all assemble in the long reception-tent, and there, in the absence of a clergyman, Thomason himself would read the Services of the Church for the day [1].

For the marching routes, the main or trunk road from Benares to Delhi would be either macadamized or in the course of becoming so. But apart from this great artery, the subsidiary lines, like the veins in the system, would be nothing more than the soil smoothed or levelled. The rivers, such as the Ganges at Benares and Allahábád, the Jumna at Agra and Delhi, are now spanned by railway viaducts; but in those days the only crossing consisted of temporary bridges of boats, or pontoons thrown across the stream, and maintained merely for the winter months, when the waters would be low.

On the line of march the daily change of scene prevents monotony being felt even in those districts, which from their flatness would ordinarily be deemed monotonous. The heart or centre of these Provinces, the 'Doáb' or Mesopotamia of the Ganges and the Jumna, is an even expanse. For two hundred miles and more this uniformly fertile, highly cultivated and densely peopled tract would by some travellers be

[1] The discourses which he used to read were taken from the *Parochial Sermons* by the Rev E. Cooper, Rector of Yoxall, Staffordshire.

regarded as dull from its sameness. But Thomason would be thinking of all the objects which at every moment met his eye in relation to the common life, the daily round, the trivial task, of the native population. He would be scanning the roadway and its material, the police stations, the fields and their boundaries, the soil and agriculture, the wayfarers, the traffic, the means of rural and mercantile transport. He had in Bengal been used to see bamboo cottages with thatched roofs festooned by creepers. But now he perceives nought save flat-roofed houses of baked earth, plain even to ugliness. Still these were the homes of his people, and the comfort of their interior would be near to his thoughts. Elsewhere the country is more attractive, and occasionally attains the acme of attractiveness for a mind like his. From the confluence of the two venerated and classic rivers at Allahábád, eastwards, things of beauty on the banks of the united Gangetic stream would present themselves till he reached Benares. In that unique abode of Hindu faith and learning he might feel, as his father once felt, repulsion at the scenes in and about the temples; but he could not fail to marvel at the long river-frontage of the much-thronged city. Moving north-eastwards, he would revisit his own Azamgarh, fraught with memories of homely happiness and of high enterprise undertaken with the ardour of early manhood. He will exchange countless greetings with the natives, who would evince all the genial tact of their race in recalling themselves to the remem-

brance of Europeans with whom they had formerly been acquainted. Beyond that he would traverse Gorakhpur, till he sighted the belt of jungle that fringes the base of the Himálaya. Reverting to the western portion of his territories, he would cross the Ganges into Rohilkhand, where the country at once becomes more diversified and the races of men more interesting. He would not at this winter-tide proceed northwards to Kumáun, for there the alpine character of the country forbids marching in state. But he would assuredly turn westwards to Hardwár to study the head-works of that system of irrigation canals which, then inchoate, was destined to become the finest of its kind in the world. Proceeding homewards to his headquarters at Agra, he would pass through the Delhi territory and also halt at the imperial city. With historic imagination he would realize the fate of successive dynasties, leaving their mark one after another on the land of their adoption by structures which, though in decay or ruin, still serve to discriminate each epoch from the others. These noble relics seem to have once had a depressing effect on his father, then wrapt in the contemplation of things sacred. But to the son they are infinitely suggestive of ideas relating to the social evolution from century to century of the people now under his charge. He causes surveys to be made so that the steps and stages of their history may be better understood, and particularly that the old water-courses, canals and fountains may be discerned. It is indeed

the suggestiveness of ruins that makes him eager to search for them in all parts of his territories. Before reaching Agra he would traverse Mathra-Brindában, a tract of all tracts the most classic in Hindu mythology.

One mainspring of his success was the use he made of the opportunities afforded by these tours for promoting the physical development of the country, improving the social status of its inhabitants, and becoming acquainted with the merits or the faults of the public servants in all grades. He was gifted by nature with an eye for noting the contour and configuration of lands or localities. Had he not been a civilian ruler, he might have been a great surveyor, pioneer, or hydraulic engineer. Restricted as were his powers in regard to the greater public works, he had yet the command of the countless local improvements, and the lesser works scattered throughout the country. The guidance, the impulse, the origination, the rectification, which he afforded to all these affairs during his marches, were of untold value. These, too, were the opportunities for the Natives to urge their grievances before him face to face; and for him to gather the drift of Native opinion or sentiment. From these meetings some formal, some social, some casual or accidental, he would learn how to recommend reform of the laws or of the executive regulations. These, too, were the occasions for his noticing the indigenous institutions of the country, some time-honoured and incorporated into

the British system, others falling into desuetude or becoming mere memories of the past. Among these relics he specially studied those which related to education, from the highest to the most elementary grade; and no European has ever excelled him in the sympathetic and skilful examination of village-schools in the vernacular. In these several ways he became imbued with that confidence which can spring from ocular evidence alone, and acquired a living faith in what was wanted and what was practicable for the welfare of the land and the people.

Further, he thus obtained an insight into the character and qualities of his officers in all grades. He saw their works *in situ*, witnessing their successes or their failures, their projects and their performances. He thus discovered with unerring perspicacity how to put the right man into the right place and to avoid putting him into the wrong place. In this, which is perhaps the most essential part of a ruler's duties in India, he acquired a painstaking proficiency that has never been exceeded. In a private letter he once wrote that he had six good appointments vacant and six officers wanting appointments, but unluckily the men did not suit the places. This point was set forth immediately after his death by a most competent witness [1].

[1] Sir William Muir, who was Secretary to the Government at Agra. See *Calcutta Review*, Dec, 1853.

'Mr. Thomason possessed a rare power of discriminating character, and no opportunity was so favourable for exercising it, as to find a man in the midst of his daily work. With unexpected rapidity, the Lieut.-Governor would perceive the weak point of a case or line of procedure; and the officer, if not thoroughly master of his work, would find himself foiled by one whom he counted upon as a stranger to his business, but who turned out to be more thoroughly acquainted with its details than himself. The earnest worker, and the aspiring subordinate, were recognized and encouraged. The former would be incited to prosecute, with redoubled energy, some occupation of his own devising; and the impulse thus given to talent and application, would prove perhaps the starting-point of a useful, if not distinguished career. To the latter, some special sphere of industry or research would be suggested.

'Such generous appreciation, accorded by one who ever exhibited a lively interest in the success and the welfare of his subordinates, elicited from them a grateful response; and he received, in consequence, that ready and devoted service—the fruit of a loving and admiring spirit—which is incomparably more valuable than the forced obedience of fear and constraint.'

Now, the importance of travelling through the country—seeing things with his own eyes, hearing what people say with his own ears,—has been recognized by every ruler in India, and the recognition has always borne fruit in practice. In other words, that which Thomason did most fully, has been done more or less by all Anglo-Indian governors. But he accomplished it more completely, more systematically, more effectually than any of them. Here again, he did best that which

many eminent persons have striven to do well. But he possessed facilities in this respect which have never fallen to the lot of anyone else, and the opportunities, of which he admirably availed himself, have not been enjoyed equally by any other ruler of India. The term of incumbency for a Governor and Lieutenant-Governor has for a long time past been limited to five years; but he was under no such limitation, having held his high office for ten years when he died; and apparently he might have retained it indefinitely if so minded. On this ground alone, then, it is impossible for other rulers to study their provinces as he studied his. Some rulers, too, have often had capital cities like the Presidency towns, of vast magnitude, which by themselves absorb much thought that might otherwise be given to the interior of the country; but he had no such capital of consequence to rivet his attention. Some rulers, again, have been distracted by war, or frontier difficulties, or other emergencies, or internal calamities; fortunately he was spared from such disturbance. Consequently very few have been enabled to give such unremitting care, for so continuous and lengthened a term, to the work of visitation as he gave. Thus no historic competitors have ever had quite the chance of equalling him, but even if they had, it is hardly conceivable that they would or could have outstripped him.

During all these years his headquarters were at Agra, where he found the early summer to be such as to render the place one of the hottest abodes on earth.

In the latter part of the summer he would feel relief from the periodical rains. An interval of tolerable weather in the autumn would present itself, during which he might visit the relics of Mughal glory that are scattered round this veritable tomb of the richest empire that was ever established by Moslem arms. As Delhi is a sister capital of Agra, he might almost have considered the fallen empire as broken into two fragments, of which one lay entombed at Delhi, but the larger one at Agra. He would note the country seat and hunting ground of Akbar the Great at Fatehpur Síkri, where the Moslem Emperor held the nightly debates on eclectic religion; the tomb of that puissant Emperor at Sikandra, graven with a hundred names of the Deity; the lovely though majestic proportions and the glistening marble of the Táj Mausoleum, mirrored in the stream of the Jumna; the red sand-stone fortress overhanging the river; the peerless mosque of marble; and the lattice-window where the dying emperor Sháh Jahán was placed to take his last look at the Táj.

For the whole or a part of several summers he sojourned at Agra. But during other summers he had the advantage of avoiding the hottest months by spending the time at Simla, where all his correspondence followed him. This place was beyond his jurisdiction, being at first on the North-West Frontier before the Punjab wars, and afterwards reckoned among the Punjab dependencies. It is now a fine alpine settlement and the summer resort of the Empire; in those days it was a rising station amidst

oak forests and rhododendrons, with a look-out on the snowy range. He might have ascended the hill over the Dehra Dún valley or sojourned on the plateau of Kumáun, both of which places were in his jurisdiction, and are equal to Simla in climate. To his tired eye the Himálayan scenery is restful. He describes to his young daughter in England the view from his study window; there is an opening in the clouds which enshroud the mountains; through that he gazes on the distant plains 8000 feet below him; they are basking in the sunshine which lights up the Sutlej and its feeders like golden streaks. He visited the Mission station of Kotgarh on the upper Sutlej and ascended the lofty mountain of Hattu. But he acknowledged in private letters that he could not shake off the sad associations of Simla in reference to his domestic bereavement. He rightly resorted thither in order to be with the Governor-General. Certainly it was thus that he acquired a just influence over the mind of Lord Dalhousie.

In the spring of 1849, after arranging the transfer of his best officers to the Punjab, he proceeds to Simla. His health at this time is far from strong, weaker indeed than he ever allowed the public to suppose. He alludes to the arduous work of pacification then proceeding in the Punjab, and says that excitement such as that would crush the strength he then had. At times he feels as if he could meet his end 'without regret.' He writes, 'the longer one lives, the less reason one has to shrink from the aspect of death'

—and again, 'I am fastened to the post by a chain for several years, unless meanwhile the chain shall snap.' But with a rally he declares that he will brace himself with all his remaining energies for the government of his own Provinces. And the resistless movement of progress is displayed by him before a world that little knows the suffering he has to endure.

Towards the end of 1851 he visits the Punjab, marching as far as Lahore. There he meets his old official friends, and above all he sees Montgomery in the full tide of success. On his way back to his own Provinces he sends Montgomery a memento with some touching words—'if such be God's good will we may meet again on earth—but that will little matter so long as we can look with certainty to another ultimate meeting, unalloyed by sin and sorrow, unclouded by the apprehension of its termination.' In fact the parting at Lahore was final, for these two loving brothers never met again.

Thus the bark of the Government year after year, his hand being on the helm, moved through the troublesome waves of events with a steadiness seldom vouchsafed to Governments in India. Probably no Government has ever enjoyed such an even tenour in its ways as his. No ruler of India has ever understood better than he how to lubricate the machinery of administration, its wheels, its joints, its motive powers. Immense was the number of short letters, private or demi-official, brief and pointed but kindly

and courteous, which he wrote with his own hand to his officers of all grades, regarding measures which they had been officially instructed to execute. To each letter there would be appended at the end a few words of a friendly and confidential character, to make the recipient put his heart into the work. In many cases these concluding words were treasured up by those to whom they were addressed.

Without any disparagement of the Civil Service as it was in 1843, it must be admitted that his nomination to the Lieutenant-Governorship was received with some surprise by many, especially those of the senior grades who had served in these Provinces from the beginning of their careers. He was considered to be a favourite of official fortune, a talented young man of conspicuous qualities, calculated to attract the notice of the Governor-General in Council. He had, indeed, gone through the drudgery, as well as borne the honour, of a District Officer's life for several years. Still, after a brief apprenticeship, he had rapidly advanced to several high posts, almost as if by flight from height to height, and then by the favour of the Governor-General had been straightway appointed Lieutenant-Governor. He himself wrote privately, 'I may meet with detraction and shall have to overcome prejudices. . . . But the God who has placed me there (Agra) will enable me to do my duty—or if He shall see fit to discredit me or remove me from the sphere, He can also give me submission to His will.' He added 'Sir Matthew Hale

justly says, "reputation is a brittle thing which the devil aims to hit in a special manner."' So he would not allow himself to feel 'any morbid sensitiveness' to criticism. Personally and socially he found himself 'most cordially received.' But for a few years he hardly obtained from some of the elder officers, men of what would then have been called the old school, an adoption of his policy *ex animo*, though they duly rendered official obedience. He had really to work, as he himself would say, through the younger men. The new-comers, the recently appointed officers, the freshmen, so to speak, in the great official college, became his zealous disciples. But as public life advances with rapid strides in India, the younger men soon became the seniors and the leaders; so by degrees he found himself possessing influence over all alike.

CHAPTER VIII

Private Life in Government House

Besides the public career described in the last preceding chapter, Thomason had to lead a private and individual life in the Government House. He attended to everything in its place and in its season. He would care for duty all round, official, social, domestic, not permitting any one branch to interfere with or hide another.

The day of his assuming charge of the Government, December 12th (1843), was Montgomery's birthday, and he takes this occasion of writing to his brother-in-law, who was then in England. He begins by citing two texts from Proverbs 'for the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding'—'trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.' He declares his need of wisdom from above, as well as humility, 'on this great occasion and stirring crisis' of his life. After some remarks on the warlike events just then impending at Gwalior—with which his recent experience as Foreign Secretary rendered him familiar—he concludes by adverting to what was now his own

Agra. He says that the place is pleasant: 'but who would not see it *couleur de rose* on a bright, sharp, bracing December day, and in all the first blush of excitement from the new dignity?'

After he is settled in the Government House, his domestic temperament re-asserts itself. He writes that his palace is dreary to him, though crowded with official friends and bright with social gatherings. He feels 'alone in the crowd.' He misses 'her voice which is hushed for ever, and the circle of children' which will never be re-assembled as he knew it. Again alluding to his wife full seven years after her death, he says—'Sometimes I think, what would I give for one of those smiles that used to chase away all care'—but he adds—'What is a man worth if he has no stronger reliance than on a fellow-creature like himself?' Seeing the happy homes of others he says that 'a chord is touched.' To near relations he from time to time laments his domestic void, but believes that it will never be filled.

He dreaded lest the elation, inseparable from his advancement, should arouse personal vanity. 'Never,' he writes, 'was a greater snare invented for weak and sinful men than praise and prosperity.' Again he says—'In the time of our wealth and success, Good Lord, deliver us!' Yet he will be grateful—''tis a sorry jade which improves not by good treatment—but can only be roused by whip and spur.' Further, he will strive after a frame of mind which 'prosperity cannot elevate nor adversity depress.' Referring to

the death of a friend from an accident on horseback, exactly like the one which befell himself ten years before in the same neighbourhood, he exclaims—'God spared me, but he is killed,—Be still, and know that I am God.'

In every public or national juncture he flies to Religion instantly. He writes that 'faith in God is the foundation of all true heroism.' Thus strengthened, he addresses himself to affairs with confidence and self-possession. In 1848 the revolutions, which overspread Europe, disturbed opinion in India. He refers to the Psalm—'say unto God how terrible are thy works; through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee!', which text he had cited on hearing of the Kábul disaster ten years previously. At this time, 1848, his Provinces were denuded of troops for the war in the Punjab, and some fanatical plots were being hatched. But he made preparations to counteract them with the utmost vigilance and activity. Believing that *émeutes* and uprisings are often traceable to some remediable discontent—he would, after suppressing the disturbance, patiently remove the causes that might provoke a recurrence of it. Though merciful to all pardonable offences, he would treat inexcusable wrong with strict severity and energetic promptitude.

In taking a survey of his own position, he looked much to opinion in England. In his youthful years at Cambridge, he had been accustomed to observe eloquence in argument operating upon general opinion.

He knew that many good people at home thought, felt and prayed for India, and he gave the British public credit for having this sentiment diffused more widely perhaps than it really was. He held that when our arms and policy had done their best, the longer and more exacting task remained of governing the countries that had been conquered or annexed. A passage may be cited from a private letter of his, addressed to a lady in England, in 1849 just after the second Punjab War:—

'India will now be less a subject of interest in England than it has lately been. The mischances or the exploits of war dazzle or charm the multitude, but it is in the quiet operations of peace, which ensue from such a turmoil, that constancy, perseverance, circumspection and diligence are called forth. That is the quiet and unostentatious labour, but also the high and responsible duty, to which we are now called to address ourselves, with regard to this great country, which God has placed in our hands. For its right performance we no less require the best wishes and prayers of our fellow-countrymen, than for protection in the day of battle or for deliverance from a threatening enemy. Do not therefore think that because we less prominently figure in the public eye, the Christian duty of supplication and intercession may be safely laid aside.'

At Agra he was provided with a Government House, not palatial and perhaps hardly in accordance with Oriental notions of proconsular state, nevertheless, commodious and sufficient, with large halls for the reception of European officers and Native chiefs. He was punctilious only in regulating his own con-

duct with courtesy towards others. His considerateness regarding the comfort and convenience of those around him was unfailing. He was constantly diffusing graceful kindnesses in all directions. While residing here in summer he seized the occasion for a kind of hospitality which was in that day, and perhaps still is, practised by high officials in most parts of India, but which he practised to a degree rarely attained. European officers who came to join his government, or to serve under him in any capacity, would be invited to stay with him for a few days. The men thus invited had full opportunity of learning his views and of exchanging ideas with him, the result naturally being that they became attached to his policy and imbued with his principles. He had much fluency in conversation, and his thoughts would be gently distilled like the dew. Young men, almost youths, just arrived from England would be impressed by his gracious kindness in a strange land, and fell at once under the spell of his influence. Many officers, who themselves have afterwards risen to fame and power, would acknowledge that they first drew their inspiration from these hospitalities at Agra.

In the hot season there was hardly any amusement indoors or out of doors save one, namely the swimming bath, the breadth and capacity of which, under the roof of the Government House, would astonish new comers from Europe. The boisterousness of aquatic exercises made the spirits of men rise high, despite the depressing heat. Thomason himself, though like the Romans of

old a great bather and well practised in the exercise of the swimming bath, did not join in any public display; nor did he go out in the mornings on horseback, which omission was to be regretted. After working from early morn till eve, he would start for an excursion in a carriage with four horses. The hot winds of the day subsiding at sunset caused the glowing atmosphere to be still and close. So he would direct the postilions to drive rapidly in order that he might inhale such breeze as could thus be obtained.

The fortnightly mail from England affords a tonic to the nervous tension and recreation to his care-worn mind. This post happily differs from the daily posts; it is laden for him with chequered news, but the joy and hope prevail over the tender anxieties.

He writes to his daughter that he carries about with him in his pocket a little red book, given him by her departed mother, marked with the birthdays of the children and containing a text of Scripture for every day in the year. He asks her to obtain one like it for herself. Indeed, he is most diligent in writing to his children as they grow up in England. The length as well as the number of these letters is amazing; many have been lost, but enough of them are preserved to show that the total (written during the busiest years of his Government) must have been more than an octavo volume in bulk. Most of those now extant have fine passages, and some, as compositions, are beautiful throughout. The substance of the letters is religious, but they abound with practical

directions for the training of thought and habit. He frankly declares that the duty of instructing his children in the highest things is the best discipline for himself—he dreads to think what he might have been, as a solitary man, without this responsibility which he affectionately discharges. The little daguerreotypes as they arrive 'look love' at him. His daughter is to play the harp, she is to collect her mother's music, especially the pieces from Handel which for him are fraught with the 'fondest associations.' He enquires about the telescope and the shell-cabinet, with a little lecture on conchology and 'star-gazing.' With the softer culture he mingles some spirit-stirring utterances respecting his high functions —his 'measures being successful'—'prosperity advancing'—'the mind of the people awakening'—his own 'efforts'—and even his 'triumphs.' There is infinite variety in the letters; in one respect only is there sameness, namely, the all-pervading affection.

It has been mentioned in chapter V that at Azamgarh he kept a manuscript book, in which were written by his own hand extracts from authors on religious subjects. In 1845 he begins a similar book for his second daughter Elizabeth, generally called Bessie, and completes it as a present for her sixteenth birthday in 1850. This book contains 180 closely written pages. It is, like the former one, chiefly filled with passages from the earlier English divines, but includes extracts from St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Bernard; and translations from Pascal, Massillon, Fénelon.

In 1850 his eldest daughter Maynard, generally known as Maynie, joins him from England[1]. He writes: 'To me she is the greatest comfort that can be —I cannot say how delightful a companion I find her.'

On her arrival he institutes a new book like that just described. Especially intended for her use, it was commenced at her suggestion in June of that year, and was kept up to the very close of his life. The authors, whom he continues reading daily (as he had read in earlier years), belong mostly to the elder time, such as Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, Beveridge, Thomas à Kempis, Leighton, George Herbert, Quarles, Pollock, Nelson, Evelyn. Extracts are made also from some contemporary writers; for example, Keble, in his 'Christian Year,'—Tennyson's 'In Memoriam,'—Longfellow's verses about the reality and earnestness of life—The 'Lyra Innocentium'—and in prose Henry Melvill the Principal of Haileybury College, and Daniel Wilson the Bishop of Calcutta.

From this manuscript book two short passages may be cited by way of illustration. They run thus, as he transcribed them in the last year of his life:—

The Domestic Palace.

'Let the foundation of thy affection be virtue, then make the building as rich and as glorious as thou canst: if the foundation be beauty or wealth, and the building virtue, the foundation is too weak for the building; and it will fall.

[1] She married in 1852 Dr. John Hay, Surgeon in the Bengal Army.

Happy is he, the palace of whose affection is founded upon virtue, walled with riches, glazed with beauty, and roofed with honour.'

QUARLES' *Enchiridion.*
(*about the year* 1600.)

CAMP ALLAHABAD,
Jan. 23, 1853.

RELIGION.

'The brightest realization of the idea of religion, of the sacrifice of self, consists in carrying out in the life the vow made in the aid of worship. The divinely high or good work is life in faith, the fulfilment of the high or humble vocation, which every one may have assigned him, whether it be the prince's or the philosopher's, the clergyman's or the shoemaker's.'

BUNSEN'S *Hippolytus.*[1]

AGRA,
May 8, 1853.

In the two manuscript books together, thus given to his daughters, there are passages transcribed from full one hundred authors. This indicates a wide range of reading on sacred subjects, by a man so intensely occupied in secular affairs as he was. More noteworthy memorials of him and his inner mind cannot be had than these little volumes.

There is preserved a copy of the 'Lyra Apostolica,' wherein he has been careful, after due ascertainment, to write the names of the anonymous contributors, Newman, Keble, and others.

[1] See *Life of Bunsen*, vol. ii. p. 287.

He fed his thoughts on the rich pathos of the Letters by Rutherford the Scotch mediaeval divine, which gave him the consolation they had already given to several generations.

When Maynie completes the second decade of her young life, he writes:—

'The completion of a decade, and that the most important of all, when the child springs into the woman . . . Youth with its golden opportunities, its rich advantages, its precious seed-time, has passed away; henceforward we must look for the fruit of the seed that has been sown. The impress we have ourselves received must be communicated to others.'

After some sentences in the same strain, he defines his own convictions, thus:—

'God the Father is ready to look down upon us in tenderness and love. God the Son presents His imputed righteousness as a sufficient safeguard from all evil. God the Holy Ghost is at hand to cleanse and sanctify us—with this threefold assurance we may walk confidently forward, immeasurably strong even in our weakness.'

These sentences of his own composition afford a fair idea of his didactic style, which may be thought to have some beauty as well as simplicity. The fact of such a record being made by such a man, amidst avocations so distracting as his, attests the power of religion over mundane influences.

He would be the more anxious to display the practical effect of Christianity on human conduct,

because he was precluded from supporting his religion by secular power. He regarded those of his countrymen, who might be under his authority, as representative men, and he was conscious with due humility that his station rendered him the most representative of them all. While avoiding the encouragement of particular forms of religious opinion among his officers, he would impress upon all alike the importance of their displaying a Christian standard in their life and conversation. Though temperate, considerate and even charitable in his judgments on private conduct, he yet was stern to rebuke, and if necessary to repress, whatever might be wrong in this respect.

For himself, he acted on his profession as a member of the Church of England; as one who loyally adhered to her doctrine and discipline, accepting her ordinances, offices, liturgy and articles, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer. But he felt a tolerant friendliness for Protestant communities generally. Indeed for him the thing of things was the Bible, to read, understand and obey. While hopeful that the progress of Christianity among the Natives might receive impulse from the good example set by Christians, he deemed that nothing could be done advantageously by Government to propagate Christianity. He would not allow any religious teaching to be introduced into the Government Schools. But he held that the fact of public servants, himself at the head, being precluded from officially aiding

Christianity, increased the obligation that lay upon them all to do their best in their private capacities for this end. He even avowed that though bound to provide seminaries where no reference was made to Christianity, yet in his private capacity he would give his money and his sympathy to Missionary Colleges, where another element in education (meaning Christianity), essential to the highest interests of mankind, was imparted. Thus he was a hearty supporter of Missions of all Protestant denominations, naturally those of his own Church first. Hereditary association attached him especially to the Church Missionary Society; and that Society had by this time established its well-appointed and effective missions at Benares and at Agra. He encouraged the American missionaries who were working at Allahábád, Fatehgarh, and a Church Mission which was beginning at Meerut. The well-known Orphanage at Sikandra (Akbar's tomb) near Agra, was in its full career of usefulness; thither had been collected the famishing orphans cast adrift without friends or relations by the famine of 1837, to be brought up under Christian auspices; to those Native Christians he gave his countenance and made them feel their fellowship with him in Christ. He occasionally attended their church services in the vernacular, and translated a part of the Psalms into elegant Hindustáni for their use.

He contributed to the support of Missions liberally though unostentatiously. He was a friend to the

Missionaries, and one[1] eminent among them, who had laboured at Agra, testified thus regarding him :—

'Having watched patiently and attentively the course of Indian Missions and partaken much in the hopes and fears which they have alternately awakened, he was sensibly affected with the report of anything which seemed to make against the progress of the truth; would suggest new plans, and point to fresh directions in which the Christian effort of each labourer engaged in the work might extend itself.

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'In us who were strengthened and encouraged by observing in him the marks of the Lord Jesus, I believe that the remembrance of him will live, and will not readily be effaced. Many a distressed and afflicted one can bear witness to the timely help he rendered . . . unknown to any but his Father who seeth in secret. His unassuming, reverent and prayerful demeanour was a blessed example to us in this house of prayer[2], of which he was so regular an attendant.'

Notwithstanding his strictness and sedateness, he could be genial and unconventional. He begins a letter of condolence in this wise—'Well, my dear, the table cloth is just removed, the last sip of wine tasted, even the coffee finished. So let me draw my chair nearer to your side and have a little chat.' Again, alluding to a prescribed time for mourning, he writes: 'It is after all only a conventional period for the

[1] Thomas Valpy French, afterwards Bishop of Lahore. A sermon to the like effect was preached at the same time, 1853, by Archdeacon Pratt in Calcutta.

[2] St. Paul's Church, Agra

exhibition of sorrow; why should the limit be fixed at the revolution of the world round the sun, rather than of the moon round the world? How trifling these things appear, except as they bear on the one great object of our lives, namely our eternal state.'

In private charity he was generous, but with discrimination. Of all the deserving charities which existed, or were set on foot in his Provinces, not one was left without his subscription. His munificence embraced churches, colleges, schools, medical dispensaries, orphanages, and the like. He set aside a tithe of his large official income for good works, but this limit was often exceeded.

While following the dictates of this charity, and maintaining the outward dignity of his high station, not extravagantly but handsomely—he yet by affectionate care succeeded in making a moderate provision for each one of his five surviving children.

The following account has been recorded by Mr. John Walter Sherer, late of the Bengal Civil Service, who was for several years Assistant Secretary to the Government at Agra:—

'Waiting once in Sir Robert Montgomery's study in Cornwall Gardens, London, I observed over the fire-place a portrait of Mr. Thomason. Sir Robert entered. I said pointing up, "I have never found his equal." He replied with emphasis—"Nor I—ever." He, like myself (as he kindly explained), was not at the time thinking of Thomason's achievements,—but of the peculiar genuineness of the man;—his devotion to duty, his abnegation of self;

his almost tender appreciation of the efforts of others, if in what he thought a right direction.

'Thomason's views were large and unprejudiced, and he could see good in the intentions and aims of persons of whose opinions he did not altogether approve.

'He inherited from his father a warm adherence to earnest views in religious matters, combined with an indifference to the attractions of the world, as such; and this fact renders it the more remarkable—that his sympathies should have been so ready and his allowances so generously conceded. The son of one who was largely mixed up with missionary exertions, his good wishes and his purse were at the call of those engaged in evangelizing projects. But, as Lieutenant-Governor, he was exceedingly scrupulous in avoiding any public measure which might bear the aspect of proselytism. Some of the disappointed or the undiscerning were anxious at times to fasten on him a charge of sectarian narrowness. But if they had known him better, they would have admitted that, whilst claiming for himself personally the exercise of his own views, he fully recognized that his official position required a larger atmosphere, and a consideration of different lines of proceeding, believed to point to the same end.

'There was no officer doing his duty, with a good heart and steady perseverance, who did not, sooner or later, receive encouragement from the head of affairs. . . .

'He had a very abiding sense of working for England. He held a strong belief that the justification of our presence in the East depended on the use of our power to open out the advantages of Western civilization to India, without unheedingly or abruptly running counter to the usages, or even the prejudices, of the people of the country. And he had a dream not only that England would one day recognize him as a right-minded statesman in the sphere where his lot had been cast—which may still be the case—but that she

was even then following his career with interest. One evening in the carriage, he said, "I love to believe the dear old country approves our work out here."

'He never neglected what society might naturally expect from his position. He gave excellent balls; and in the equipments of daily life he was very careful to keep up all the appearances suitable to his office. His carriages and horses were excellent, and in his Private Secretary and Aide-de-Camp, Captain Minchin, he had a capital manager, and one who contrived that Government House dinners should have an easy pre-eminence over private entertaining.

'In his public speeches the matter was well arranged and fluency fully secured. His manners were particularly easy, from the entire absence of self-consciousness. When Lord Dalhousie visited Agra, the expression of his face and his gestures were watched with interest, because the Governor-General was understood to have mastered deportment to the extent of being able to indicate by his bow, to a nicety, the degree of notice he deemed it appropriate to bestow. But we all thought afterwards that the self-possession of the great Proconsul was not more striking than the simplicity of our own Chief. For Mr. Thomason was exactly his good old personality, and having no pretences and nothing to hide, was perfectly unembarrassed, and reached without knowing it the perfection the other had acquired.

'Mr. Thomason was hardly a man of what is called "culture," though he appreciated it in others His time was too occupied to admit of much general reading, and he had no special turn for any of the arts. Humour had unfailing attractions for him; he said once "my greatest treat is one of Dickens' novels."

'He was a man of much personal courage. Though experiencing great difficulty in riding from his lameness, he would mount a spirited horse, and with the aid of providence

gallop in safety the morning's stage on his winter tours. And though by no means addicted to physical exercise, he taught himself swimming late in life, and delighted in diving and other caprices of the bath.

'There was nothing of the recluse about him in his public functions, but the man himself was doubtless to be discovered rather in his private apartment, interviewing specialists or indeed any one with a task in hand. He would often be turning the pages of the Book his father had reverenced, and he himself had found a standby in all troubles. The Overland Mail was a perennial joy. I recall that one night Dr. A. and I were driving with him, but as we were leaving the grounds the postilions pulled up on seeing the messenger with the English post. In one minute, before we could beg him to turn back, he was out of the vehicle and disappearing through the shrubs to read his letters in his own room. "Go for your drive," he shouted, and we found ourselves in the road with a carriage and four, and outriders, and our *raison d'être* suddenly extinguished.'

There is a novel entitled 'The Rose and the Lotus,' written by Bessie, though her name does not appear on the title-page. This book is well worth reading, because the father of the heroine 'Mr. Malcolm' is really Thomason drawn from life. Even the lesser traits and lineaments are all sketched from nature. The reception of the heroine in her father's camp is a counterpart of the actual reception of the authoress by Thomason, as proved by one of her own letters. The portraiture may be likened, not to a finished oil-painting, but to a light water-colour, with faint outline and delicate hues, nevertheless bearing an exquisite resemblance to the original. The tender cherishing

of his dead wife's memory, the preservation of the mementos which belonged to her, the judicious advice to his daughters on their entering life, the attention to public business, strenuous but serene, the biblical allusions in private conversation, the transcribing of extracts from works on divinity in a memorandum book, the considerate terms used regarding the Natives, the devotion to missionary effort, the historic lore, the fondness for searching out ruins, the tall and spirit-like form, the calm and lofty soul—are all to be found in this portrait. The presentiments of failing health and possibly approaching death are just those which Thomason must have uttered. Several parts of the book, then, are to be accepted as an account of his inner character, depicted by the accomplished hand of his own daughter, who was constantly with him to the last. The same book contains a lovely description of the Táj at Agra by this gifted lady, emulating that given by her mother in 1837. She also represents in graphic terms the beauties of Náini Tál, that being the place whither her father was proceeding when arrested by death. She was married there, and when penning this gay word-picture, little thought it would be her fate to die there also[1].

[1] She married William Johnston, of the Bengal Civil Service, at Náini Tál in 1854, and died at Náini Tál also, in 1864. Her other novel, entitled *Gifts and Graces*, has a character Mr Neville, who, although he resides in England, is a counterpart of Thomason, and this part of the book affords collateral testimony from his own daughter.

The lamented Laureate, just before his death, wrote a short poem entitled 'Akbar's Dream.' This is the Akbar mentioned in chapter VI, and the scene is laid near Agra. The purport is that the Emperor, having established a righteous rule in the very Provinces which we are discussing, foresaw that it would be upset by his successors, but would thereafter be restored by a conquering race from the West. The Emperor says:—

> 'Well, I dreamed
> That stone by stone I reared a sacred fane,
> A temple, neither Pagod, Mosque, nor Church,
> But loftier, simpler, always open doored
> To every breath from heaven; and Truth and Peace
> And Love and Justice came and dwelt therein.'

The Emperor is then struck by the Angel of Death, and dying perceives that his successors are loosening his fair work stone by stone. Yet he sees that:—

> 'From out the sunset poured an alien race
> Who fitted stone to stone again, and Truth,
> Peace, Love, and Justice came and dwelt therein.'

Now the spirit of Akbar's sway in these Provinces, though suppressed by long misrule, did still survive to be awakened into a purer life by British power, in the hands of several administrators among whom Thomason was the foremost. Thus the vision which the English Poet attributes to Akbar, does exactly represent the future that was destined to be realized under Thomason and his brethren.

CHAPTER IX

The Land Settlement

Throughout Thomason's life and administration, certain principles of civil policy, like guiding stars, were ever kept in sight; these have been alluded to more than once, and must now be more directly noticed.

His first and last thoughts were devoted to the establishment of property in land, and to the recognition of the proprietary rights of the people in their holdings. In his Provinces (as in most other parts of India) the landed interest is overwhelmingly great; indeed the people might be described by a generic term, as those who live by the land. This great interest came under the cognizance of his government to a degree unknown in Western countries. In English-speaking nations we hear of Land Bureaux, Land Commissions, Agricultural Departments, and the like; but all such institutions taken together would not represent the functions of the Land Revenue Department, as it existed under him.

As already seen, he found that the land tax had been fixed for thirty years, in every one of the forty thou-

sand villages or parishes in the Provinces; and that the assessment had been so equitable and moderate as to leave a considerable margin to the peasant proprietors. Conjointly with this cardinal operation there had been undertaken a registration of title and a 'Record of Rights.' The idea of this record was grand, a Doomsday book and Magna Charta combined. It had not been carried into effect with completeness, but a beginning had been made throughout the Provinces. In fact the record was the best that could be prepared under a certain limited time, a rough or preliminary one in some tracts, a more advanced one in other tracts; at all events a basis or starting-point everywhere. Theoretically the correct and accurate preparation of the Register or Record, at the time of the Settlement, might seem feasible, but practically it was not. The tenures, always minute and complex, had been brought into confusion by wars and revolutions. Native society was in a transition state. Accuracy could not be obtained without the co-operation of the people, and to real enquiry they had never been accustomed. Consequently the great Record, though good in some respects, was inevitably imperfect.

Now Thomason resolved that in due process of time this Record should be rectified bit by bit, till it was rendered almost perfect; that first the European Officers should be instructed how to rectify it, and that the Native proprietors should be educated by degrees to aid in the rectification. Such was the broad design which he pursued until something near

perfect success was attained. And this constitutes one of the chief reasons for his posthumous renown.

In his manual of 'Directions to Collectors,' already mentioned in chapter VII, he writes.—

'In the early days of British rule in the North-Western Provinces it was thought that the decision of all questions of individual right might be left to the operation of the ordinary Courts of Justice. Experience, however, has proved the contrary. The Natives of the country were unaccustomed to examine questions regarding rights of property with a view to their classification. It is surprising even to this day how ill informed Native gentlemen are on the subject (1849). But still less were they able then (1803 to 1833) to appreciate the change that had been effected in the old village institutions by engrafting on them the modes of procedure adopted by the British Government. The English functionaries, on the other hand, understood their own rules but had no leisure to study the old institutions of the country. Injustice and confusion necessarily ensued. Designing men usurped rights which did not belong to them, and blunders of all possible kinds were committed by those who ought to have protected the rights of the weaker parties. In such confusion the litigation increased, till the whole machinery of the judicial administration was choked, and it became necessary to take active measures to introduce order and certainty where hitherto confusion and uncertainty only had reigned. Hence resulted the system of Record which was introduced in 1822. There are some who still look with despair on the magnitude and difficulty of this undertaking. They see the country divided into small properties, which are held on peculiar tenures differing one from the other. They are aware of the general ignorance and are brought into intercourse with the most designing, crafty and unprincipled of the mass. There is no

desire to underrate these difficulties. But it is impossible now to withdraw from the course which has been commenced. The intention has been wisely disclaimed of making any revolution in the disposition of property. It has been decided to determine what are the existing rights and to uphold them. Great progress has been made in the performance. But it would be vain to suppose that all which is necessary has been already done. The original record formed at the time of Settlement was often erroneous and imperfect; indeed it could not be otherwise. The system was new, the mass of the people were unable to comprehend the object and nature of the proceedings, and were moreover suspicious of any measures connected with the assessment of their lands. Under these circumstances it is surprising that so much was done, and so well done, at the time of Settlement. There is far more reason to take courage from the great progress already made, than to despair at the magnitude of what still remains to be done.'

Now, with some condensation, this is Thomason's account of his policy in his own words; and the very spirit of the man, the working of his mind, his style and method, are all apparent. Then there is found an important paragraph, by which he impresses his precepts on those concerned:—

'Let us suppose an intelligent officer appointed to the charge of a district where he is likely to remain some years. He is acquainted with the system of registration, and convinced of the importance and practicability of maintaining it. On coming, however, to refer to his Settlement records in cases that casually occur, he finds them imperfect or erroneous. He concludes that registers resting on such a basis must be defective, and he determines to apply himself in earnest to

the correction of the errors. It is the design of the present treatise to aid him in such an undertaking, and to show that it is not difficult at any time to make a fresh commencement, and to attain that degree of accuracy which it was designed to ensure at the time of Settlement.'

He then proceeds to give minute directions to his many District Officers for the rectification of the Record of Rights. Moreover he takes good care that these directions are carried out, not hastily nor spasmodically, but cautiously and steadily, locality by locality, tract by tract, village by village, till in the course of years the whole thing is virtually done throughout his widely extended Provinces.

He is particular in urging his European Officers, after having instructed themselves, to instruct their Native subordinates, and then the Natives generally. Thereon he expresses a sentiment which was very near to his heart:—

'The Revenue system, when rightly understood and properly worked, affords the greatest stimulus to the general education of the people. Indeed it cannot be expected that the registration of rights will ever become perfect till the people are sufficiently educated to understand it, and to watch over its execution.'

This Record related, as he himself phrased it, to the rights of the people in the land. This property, rightfully and virtually possessed by masses of men in his Provinces, had he thought been over-ridden, trampled under foot, blurred, defaced, obscured, almost

stamped out, but never extinguished, in all the troubles that had swept over the Upper Ganges Valley. To his mind, the British Government was in duty bound to preserve this property wherever it was found to be still existing, not to re-create it where it had been lost, but to conserve and even develope its existence where it was still living, even though the vital spark might be faint. But then he noticed that the value of this property must depend on the determination of the land tax. By immemorial law and custom the ruling power was entitled to a share in the produce of cultivation, and there was nothing, save the will of that power, to regulate the proportion of the produce represented by such share, which he termed 'the Government demand.' He felt that if this share should be fixed too high, and if the State demand should become excessive or uncertain or capricious, then the property would be depreciated or almost valueless; if on the other hand, the demand should be temperately and equitably regulated, then the property would be a living thing of actual and enjoyable value. It would be his first duty to search out this property everywhere, for the sake of his people, to bring it into full operation, to hedge it round with reasonable security. For that object the Settlement, with the assessment of the land tax for thirty years, had been fixed throughout the country, well and justly as he believed. He still had the power, not indeed to enhance, but to reduce the assessment, and he would not suffer the demand anywhere to be such as to injure the property in land.

So one of his strongest titles to permanent remembrance is this, that he was among the foremost of those who systematized, cherished, secured and rendered effective the property of the Natives in the land of northern India. It is well, however, that his position in this momentous matter should be set forth by his own *dicta*. The treatises of his authorship were not merely those of an author well informed, but came from an authority addressing readers who were all bound to obey him, and many of whom looked up to him as a guide, philosopher and friend.

Almost his first words to Settlement Officers are these:—

'It is the true interest of the Government to limit the demand to what is just, so as to create a valuable property in the land and encourage its improvement. In order further to encourage this improvement it is necessary to determine the persons to whom all the benefits belong, which arise out of the limitation of the demand on the land. To perform these operations is to make a Settlement. Under ordinary circumstances, the prosperity of the country depends on this being justly and perfectly done.

'There are evidently two distinct operations in the formation of a Settlement. The one is fiscal, the determination of the Government demand—the other is judicial, the formation of the record of rights. Ordinarily the two operations are performed at the same time, and there are many reasons which render such an arrangement very desirable. But if, from any cause, the judicial part was omitted when the fiscal was performed, there is no reason why the former should not be subsequently carried into execution.'

Further on he enforces the same doctrine in these words:—

'Whoever may be in theory the proprietor of land in India, the absence of all actual restriction on the supreme power, in the determination of the amount of its demand, left all property in the land virtually dependent on its will. An estate assessed above its productive power is worthless, and must cease to produce anything to the proprietor unless the demand is relaxed. So long as the worth of the land is left, from year to year, dependent on the pleasure of the Government, its value must be uncertain and cannot be great. But when the Government limits its demand to a reasonable amount, and fixes that amount for a term of years, a marketable property is thereby created, and it becomes of much importance that the person be named in whose favour this property is recognized or created.'

He supports this principle in several passages thus:—

'The assessment (of the land tax) having determined the value of the property in land, it then becomes necessary to declare the right possessed in that property. The object of this investigation is not to create new rights but to define those which exist.'

Then he proceeds to say:—

'It is first requisite to point out what is meant by proprietary right, and what is to be considered the test of such right.'

After presenting several definitions, applicable to complex or obscure cases, he concludes thus:—

'In ordinary cases there is no difficulty. The common voice of the country assigns the proprietary right to a person

or a number of persons who for years paid the Government demand, provided for the cultivation of the land, enjoyed all its products, and transferred it to others at pleasure. The payment of the Government revenue is in ordinary cases so immediately the result of proprietary right, that the latter is often held to be included in the mention of the former . . . But the proprietary right may have been overborne, and it may be difficult to determine with whom it rests . . . Where no proprietary right exists or has ever been exercised, it rests with the Government to decide whether they will retain it in their own hands, confer it on any class of persons already connected with the Government, or grant it or sell it to strangers. The Government have, however, always shown themselves ready to confer the proprietary right on any persons possessing a preferential claim, though it may not amount to an absolute right.'

Simultaneously he guards the rights of tenants cultivating under the peasant proprietors, or under the village communities, or under larger land-owners. These men, he finds, may have a title to cultivate with fixed rents, or have occupancy tenures, not liable to enhancement of rent save by decree of Court, or hold a hereditary position descending from father to son. Whatever their status might be, he treats it as a property though of an inferior degree. The securing of tenant-right was indeed a cardinal point in his policy; and the position of occupancy cultivators, as settled by him, became afterwards the basis of several legislative enactments in northern India.

It will be remembered that all these instructions are addressed by him to the Settlement Officers. He

follows up the principle of property in his instructions to the Collectors of Land Revenue. He begins by saying that:—

'By the British Government, contracts for the land revenue have been universally formed on avowedly easy terms, for perpetuity or for periods of years, and the proprietors have been allowed to appropriate to their own use all the surplus that they can derive from the land over and above the stipulated sum. The Government demand has therefore become a tax on rent.'

Towards the end of the Instructions, in reference to the Record Office, he reminds the Collectors that this office was formed so far back as 1803, that is, in the very dawn of British rule in these Provinces:—

'With a view to the future security of the dues of Government, and of rights and property of individuals . . . As the office, thus constituted, is designed for the good of the community at large, all the arrangements regarding it should be such as to afford the freest access to the documents it contains.'

Not content with all these declarations he reiterates their substance in a Preface to the general edition of the Instructions, re-published in 1849. After explaining that the assessment of the land tax, now complete throughout the Provinces, 'has been so made as to leave a fair surplus profit over and above the net produce of the land,' he states:—

'It is determined who are the persons entitled to receive this surplus profit. The right thus determined is declared

to be heritable and transferable. The persons entitled to it are declared the proprietors of the land.'

He again expounds the relation of the Government towards the proprietor of the soil:—

'THE RECOGNITION OF A PROPRIETARY RIGHT IN THE LAND.

'Undoubtedly traces are often to be found of the existence and exercise of a proprietary right in the land on the part of individuals. But so long as the Sovereign was entitled to a portion of the produce of all land, and there was no fixed limit to that portion, practically the Sovereign was so far owner of the land as to be able to exclude all other persons from enjoying any portion of the net produce, The first step therefore towards the creation of a private proprietary right in land was to place such a limit on the demand of the Government, as would leave to the proprietors a profit, which would constitute a valuable property. This is effected by providing that the assessment shall be a moderate portion of the net produce at the time of settlement.'

In the Preface of the codified Instructions to which he had appended his own name, he declares that:—

'This work is designed not for the information of the general reader, but for the direction of the public officer in the discharge of his duties.'

By this he means that these instructions are delivered *ex cathedrâ*, and are to be obeyed in spirit as well as in letter. They are addressed by him to his officers and to his people, between whom and him there is the

bond of mutual understanding, common experience, and companionship in labour. Thus for ten years he exerted power which was almost as great morally as it was officially. That power he put forth for the vindication of this vast property in land, belonging not to the million only but to several millions of men The principle has been better understood and followed since his time than it was before or during his day; and others besides him have contended for the same object. But on the whole it may be said that no Briton in India ever battled for this principle more opportunely and effectually, or ever carried it out more authoritatively and practically, than he. For this cause alone (irrespective of other causes) the Natives of India ought to hold his name in everlasting remembrance.

But as the people gradually perceived the value of the proprietary right, disputes regarding the interests of individuals, always more or less rife, began to multiply; and he knew that if these could not be settled by his executive officers, recourse must in the last resort be had to the Civil Courts. He was naturally anxious to avoid this *ultima ratio* if possible, and to encourage the revenue authorities to adjust such matters on the spot. He would have this adjustment made when the Record of Rights was prepared for the first time. If not effected on that occasion, it was to be undertaken afterwards when the Record came to be revised and rectified. These informal tribunals with their rustic surroundings were about this time

(1849) picturesquely described by a most competent witness [1]:—

'We see the white camp rising in the long aisles of the ancient mango grove. . . . As the day advances the wide-spread shade begins to be peopled with living figures. Group after group of villagers arrive in their best and whitest dresses; and a hum of voices succeeds to the stillness. The carpet is then spread in the open air; the chair is set; litigants and spectators take their seats on the ground in orderly ranks; silence is proclaimed, and the rural court is opened. As case after case is brought forward, the very demeanour of the parties, and of the crowds around, seems to point out on which side justice lies. All are free to come and go, with little trouble, and at no expense. No need of lengthened pleadings. A few simple questions bring out the matter of the suit, and the grounds on which it rests. Scores of witnesses are ready on the spot, alike unsummoned and untutored. No need of the Koran, or Ganges water. The love of truth is strong, even in an Indian breast, when preserved from counteracting influences; still more so, then, when the sanction of public opinion assists and protects the rightful cause. In such a court Abraham sat, when arbitrating among his simple-minded herdsmen. In such a court was justice everywhere administered in the childhood of the human race.'

While thus giving effect to this property in land, Thomason necessarily came in contact with the Village Communities, already mentioned in chapter VI. He considered these to be bodies of proprietors and they

[1] Article in *Calcutta Review*, vol. xvi p. 467, by John Thornton, for some years Secretary to Government under Thomason.

held in partnership their estates, composed of villages, more correctly of townships or parishes. Their peculiarity consisted in the partnership, originally described in Persian phrase, which he translated into English as coparcenary; adopting, apparently, Blackstone's definition, which indeed exactly meets the case:—

'All the coparceners together make but one heir, and have but one estate among them.'

He found that the assessment of the land tax had been made for the whole township *en bloc*, and that the engagement for paying the revenue had been concluded not with each partner individually for his share, but with the entire Community for the whole estate. Thence he inferred that the responsibility, for defraying the charge, rested not with individual coparceners, but the coparcenary body as a whole. This he termed 'joint responsibility,' and accordingly the Community would be liable for the default of anyone among its members. In other words, if any sharer failed to pay his quota of the revenue, the Community must pay, and then take over, or make other arrangements for, his share. It was for the Community to determine by agreement the shares, the interests and the quotas of its members in the general burden. But the Government demand was upon the Community, and the liability was in common. To this plan Thomason steadfastly adhered, because it was fraught with advantages not otherwise attain-

able. While he exercised all his considerateness in mitigating hardships, yet difficulties must have arisen among some of the Village Communities in the enforcement of their joint responsibility for the default of weak brethren; so much so, that by opponents the system was stigmatized as one of 'compulsory joint-stockeries,' it being proverbially easy to give to any plan an unfavourable name. This went so far that in 1848 the Board of Revenue made some representation on the subject to his Government, which caused him to pen a memorable reply. He cites *in extenso* the passage from Metcalfe which has already been quoted in chapter VI, and then subjoins his own view in these words, written in September, 1848:—

'Unless the joint responsibility be merely nominal it must ordinarily be maintained. It is a principle maintained by all former Governments. It is one, the justice of which the people never dispute, and it is one of which distinct traces have been left in many of the customs which prevail in the Village Communities. It greatly promotes self-government, and renders unnecessary that constant interference with the affairs of individual cultivators on the part of the Government Officers, which must otherwise exist—it saves them from much expense which would otherwise fall upon them, and it facilitates their union for many purposes of municipal economy, which could not otherwise be effected. The efforts of the prosperous and industrious members of a Community will often be directed to stimulate the idle, to assist the unfortunate, and to give additional value to the labours of their thrifty brethren. Property being minutely divided, and each proprietor clinging with the greatest tenacity to his patrimony,

it would be difficult to devise a Civil institution better calculated to add to the happiness and prosperity of the people.'

Respecting these arrangements, he bore in mind that those co-partners, who objected to this joint responsibility, were entitled by law to escape therefrom by claiming that their shares should be partitioned off; but so attached were the co-partners in the mass to their Village system that such partition was hardly ever claimed.

Further, the system of joint responsibility in the village had, he thought, one particular advantage in this wise. It prevented the land of any among the brethren being sold to a stranger for default in payment of the Land Revenue. The sale of land by authority, on any account whatever, was, he knew, alien to the practice, if not to the principle, followed by Indian nations. Nevertheless, a civilized Western Government must needs introduce the sale of land for debt, on plain principles of reason. If land were liable for anything, it must be so for the Land Revenue assessed on it, and be sold for unpaid arrears in the last resort, even though the purchaser might be a stranger. He, like all other Governors, had to execute this law in extreme instances, failing all other means of recovering the revenue. But the trouble would be averted in the villages where joint responsibility prevailed, because there the share of the defaulting brother would be bought in by the brethren. They would pay up the amount due from him, and take over his fields, which would remain in the family or in the

cousinhood, all the same. And this process was styled the right of Pre-emption.

In connexion with the Village System Thomason greatly improved the status of those Native Officials who held their offices by hereditary tenure. Among these the chief were the Village Accountant and the District Notary[1]. It was the business of the Village Accountant to keep all the books, papers, and accounts of the Village Community, in respect to the Land Revenue. He had copies of the Settlement records including the Record of Rights, already described, for his village, and he registered the changes in possession as they occurred from year to year, the transfers of all sorts, and the succession from father to son. Then he had to send annually copies of his Record of Rights, with the necessary rectifications by reason of death, transfer, mortgage, to the District Notary, who became the custodian of the records for his division or group of villages. Thus Thomason provided for the accurate and complete maintenance of the Registration of Landed Tenures, as a permanent and effective institution, so that the benefits of the Settlement, regarding property in land, might be assured to the people.

One particular part of his policy had reference to a class of large landowners known as Tálukdárs. This matter provoked disputation at the time, and the question would arise in this wise. As already seen

[1] Called in the Vernacular 'Patwâri' and 'Kanûngo' respectively.

the land was originally owned by a mass of Peasant Proprietors. These men used to pay the land tax to the Government Officers. But not unfrequently the Native governments would contract for the land revenue in whole villages, or in groups of villages, with feudal chiefs. In such a case the chief had the right of collecting the revenue, instead of the Government, from the proprietors of the land. The proceeds of such collection, after payment of the stipulated sum to the Government, constituted his profit. So far his position was clear; but that did not affect the position of the proprietors, which remained just the same as it had been under the Government, before the assignment of the land tax to him. Now this state of things, originally equitable, became liable to abuse. If the Tálukdár was strong and despotic, if the times were troublous and warlike, and if the Native government was feeble and inefficient, the proprietors were often elbowed out of their proprietary position. The Tálukdár grew into a superior proprietor, the land tax in his hands was turned into rent, which he collected, and out of which he paid the revenue, retaining the remainder in his own hands. Then the original proprietors sank to the position of inferior proprietors, or of tenants with occupancy rights. This process was in a transition state when British rule was introduced. In some cases it had been accomplished beyond hope of retrieval, that is, the proprietors had for a long time been subjugated, and the Tálukdár had securely established himself as

landlord. In that event the British authorities had to recognize the facts found in existence. In some cases the sturdy proprietors, by means of their organization in the Village Communities, successfully resisted the Tálukdár all through the times of trouble, and were able to rebut before the British authorities his claim to superior proprietorship. But in many cases the issue had been doubtful; the Tálukdár had persistently asserted himself; the proprietors had struggled against him, and were able to contend that their proprietary right, though often down-trodden, had been neither extirpated nor extinguished. In these instances there was manifestly room for difference of opinion, according as the Government might, upon a review of the history of the circumstances and the equity of the case, incline towards the side either of the Tálukdár or of the original proprietors. Thomason considered that the right lay with the original proprietors, except where they had in former times lost their proprietary position. If the Tálukdár were acknowledged as superior proprietor, then the Revenue Settlement, already described, would be made with him. He would pay the land tax to Government, and reimburse himself with profit by what he could collect from the inferior proprietors, or the occupancy tenants, as they might chance to be at the time; and it only remained to secure such subordinate rights as might still be preserved to these people. But if the original proprietors were adjudged to be still such, then the settlement was made with them, and they

paid the land tax direct to Government; while to the Tálukdár there would be allowed by Government a certain percentage of the land revenue, reckoned to be in lieu of the profits he used to get from his assignment of the revenue after the defrayal of his charges.

Thomason first learnt this lesson at Azamgarh, before 1840. Next, in 1841, he urged it upon the Governor-General in Council and the Court of Directors. After his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor in 1843, one of his earliest private letters to the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough, bore this very burden. By 1844 he had carried his main contention, but he addressed the Governor-General in Council, with a view of reducing the allowance payable to the Tálukdárs from 22 to 10 per cent. on the land revenue, after the death of present incumbents. This measure was referred to the Court of Directors in London, who ultimately sanctioned Thomason's proposals with a proviso only, that they should not take effect during the currency of the then Settlement, that is, till about the year 1870. The Court's despatch did not reach India till after his death.

The Tálukdárs, though their pecuniary interests had been well cared for, found a restraint imposed on their power to dominate the Village Communities in their districts. Being on that account displeased, they were capable of making their voices heard, not only within these Provinces, but in Calcutta also,

perhaps even as far as Leadenhall Street in London. They also had the sympathizing advocacy of some eminent persons in the Civil Service itself. It may be well, therefore, to place Thomason's opinion beyond the reach of misapprehension by citing some opening paragraphs from his official letter to the Governor-General (Lord Ellenborough), which was certainly drafted by his own hand, and contains a lucid statement of a very controversial matter. He writes:—

'A Táluka is a large estate, consisting of many villages, or, as they would be called in English, parishes.

'These villages had originally separate proprietors, who paid their revenue direct to the Government treasury.

'The Native Government in former times made over by patent, to a person called the Tálukdár, its right over these villages, holding him responsible for the whole revenue, and allowing him a certain percentage, with other privileges, to compensate him for the risk and labour of collection.

'The wealth and influence thus acquired by the Tálukdár often made him, in fact, independent; so long as he paid regularly the sum demanded from him, he was allowed to manage the estate as he pleased. Provision was not made for protecting the rights of the village proprietors, though no one questioned the existence and inviolability of those rights.

'When the country came under British rule, engagements for payment of the Government Revenue were taken from these Tálukdárs, and they were called Zamíndárs, no notice being taken of the village proprietors.

'The Tálukdárs, previously to the introduction of British rule, had often endeavoured to eject the village proprietors, and to appropriate the villages to themselves, and had some-

times succeeded in their object. After the introduction of our rule, they continued to effect the same designs through their influence, and by means of the Courts of Law, in which the real merits of the case were little understood.

'At length when Regulation VII. 1822 was enacted, to lay down the method in which the revised Settlement was to be conducted, legal provision was made for meeting these cases.

'A class of estates was recognized in which there might be separate heritable and transferable properties, viz. that of the superior or Tálukdár, and that of the inferior or village proprietor.

'The Officers conducting Settlements were ordered judicially to ascertain where such separate properties existed, to define the amount of the net profits of the estates to which each party was entitled, and then to take the orders of the Government as to which of the two parties should be admitted to engage direct with the Government, and on what terms.'

In no affair has his policy been so much controverted by opponents as in this. From his point of view the question may be thus summarized. The matter was not one of policy to be settled by territorial considerations, but one of justice to be determined by judicial enquiry. Often the decision was clear; in some cases the Tálukdár proved that somehow he had acquired the proprietary status from the Village Community, so the judgment was in his favour; in other cases the Community proved that despite him they had kept their status, so the judgment was in their favour. But often the decision was dubious; the Tálukdár had evidence to show his acquisition of the status, the Community had

evidence to show their retention of it; so between the two there was doubt. Now, to which of these was the benefit of this doubt to be given? inasmuch as that would just decide the balance. Some authorities, for demonstrable reasons, would give this benefit to the Tálukdár; others would, for reasons equally demonstrable, give it to the Village Community. Thomason would consider this ancient Community entitled to the benefit of this doubt; and the wide controversy is narrowed to that point. Impartial and well-informed History must decide whether he was right or not—*securus judicabit orbis.*

He had to steer through a narrow strait, so to speak, of contention, with a threatening rock on either side. One rock was the danger of lowering the territorial aristocracy as a national and social force, the other rock was the danger of subverting the rights of the proprietary classes. Of this latter danger he certainly kept his administration clear. Whether he kept it equally clear of the other danger relating to the Native aristocracy, will be a question decided differently by those who incline either to the territorial or to the proprietary view; by those who belong either to one party or to the other; for in India, as in other countries, schools of opinion exist in respect of Oriental policy. Some would say that he was specially a friend to the middle and humbler classes when their interests clashed with those of the upper classes. Such a supposition, however, did him but scant justice, for he was a man of all-embracing sympathy. He

would strive by training and education to raise men in the social scale, and so acquire fresh ornaments for Native society. He would recognize fully all territorial classes or individuals who had retained a rightful position. He was ever stirring them to actions worthy of their rank. He awarded to them the meed and guerdon of honour, whenever they did deeds of public usefulness. But he would not make over to them, nor permit them to appropriate, the rights and property of others in the land; and when the controversy reached that point he would put his foot down upon the line. He would not then be deterred by threatenings of political discontent; but would say *fiat justitia* as between two important classes of our Native fellow-subjects.

By some of those who differed from him he has been called an innovator. But really there was no spirit of innovation in him, though his mind was ever bent on progress and improvement. On the contrary, his instinct was to conserve; to adopt old institutions, and if possible to render them available for present use, to take the *antiquae viae* as his starting-point, and by conciliatory proceedings to draw men gradually into the groove of advancement. He used to say to an intimate friend—Henry Carre Tucker—'support old institutions and do not distract the people by attempting a new one.' To his daughter he once wrote 'It is in the old family servants that I glory.'

CHAPTER X

Canals of Irrigation

One subject which dwelt in Thomason's thoughts was that of irrigation by canals, and in no matter was his influence more marked than in this.

It must ever be remembered that, as explained in chapter VII, he was not in command of the Public Works department, as Civil Governors of India now are, and as they naturally should be. He had no Engineer officer of rank to act as his professional adviser. Nevertheless, he played an active and personal part in these affairs, such as few Governors have ever undertaken. He had a natural bent and talent for civil engineering. If providence had not made him a Governor, he might have been a great civil engineer. Cramped and enfeebled by the then system, he had by his own skill and labour to meet the requirements of the public welfare. The manner in which he did this, under grievous disadvantage, constitutes one of his claims to honour.

First and foremost his thoughts were turned towards artificial irrigation. The terrific drought of 1836–7, mentioned in chapter VI, did not reach his

district, Azamgarh; but he probably saw something of its consequences, and at all events was fully cognizant of its horrors. As Secretary to the Governor-General in Council, and to the newly formed Government of the North-Western Provinces, he had much preliminary information regarding the projects for the greater canals in these Provinces, and the lesser canals existing or projected. He hoped by these means, at least, to mitigate misery, should drought recur. On taking in hand the reins of Government for himself, he at once entered on this business, beginning with the lesser canals. He arranged for irrigation in the 'Great Dry Tract' (ominous name) between the river Sutlej and the sandy dunes that form the watershed of the Ganges and the Indus. But this was to be done with popular help, and for that he insisted on security of tenure. His minute sets forth, 'men will not undertake to improve the land until we assure every man of his right.' He caused the old works, especially those on both banks of the Jumna near Delhi, constructed by former Native Governments, to be restored, enlarged, utilized. His quick eye, however, discovered that Native canals were unscientifically laid out, and were seldom conducted along the most favourable lines of country. Therefore he planned new works in various localities, often with very insufficient professional assistance, and by self-help he secured progress as well as initiation. During his life-time there were extant memoranda in his own hand regarding these canals, which, if now

produced, would be monuments of his personal assiduity. His principal efforts, however, were put forth for the sake of the Ganges Canal.

Nowadays the Ganges Canal, as a *fait accompli*, is one of the wonders—it might be depicted as one of the beauties and glories—of the world. In its special line it has not been equalled by anything ancient or modern anywhere. Within twenty miles from its head at Hardwár to Rúrki, are to be found more hydraulic works of magnitude and difficulty than in any similar place on the earth. The total length of the main trunks amounts to nearly a thousand miles, that of the branches to two thousand. The canal itself over a hundred feet broad, its banks fringed and lined with shady avenues, affords a spectacle as noble as it is picturesque. By this channel the waters of the Upper Ganges are carried off to fertilize the Indian Mesopotamia, that is, the country between the Ganges and the Jumna. It irrigates some two millions of acres. In the heart and centre of these Provinces it bars the way against the gaunt famine that once stalked without hindrance through the land. On the whole it is one of the chief ornaments and monuments of British rule in India. But those who admire the grand achievement to-day, little think, perhaps, of the day of small beginnings, as it was in Thomason's time. The organization of the project, its elaboration, its completion rested with Sir Proby Cautley, the Engineer, who indeed stands very high among the benefactors of northern India.

But had he stood alone he probably would have failed for a long while, and might not have lived to see the work done. The Government of India was at first sceptical as to the feasibility, and the financial results, of the project. The knowledge of the ground, its contour and capabilities, was imperfect. The conception actually was that navigation should be the first object, and irrigation quite secondary. At one time a suspension of the work was ordered, at another progress was allowed, but with very scanty resources. It is not too much to say that had the Engineer found no friend at the official court, no ally in the governing body, he must have succumbed to the adverse influences at work. But in the nick of time Thomason came to the helm of affairs, and his first care was to do battle for the canal. The authority most regarded at that juncture was the Governor-General, Lord Ellenborough. He might listen to Thomason, the new Lieutenant-Governor, who was his own nominee. Accordingly Thomason indited the most strongly argued, the most earnest, almost impassioned despatch he ever penned, pleading, appealing, for this canal. Thereby he obtained a partial, though still very insufficient, concession; and perhaps the political difficulties of that time were obstacles. His private letters show the anxiety which beset and perplexed him on this account. But he was more fortunate with the next Governor-General, Lord Hardinge, whom he had the honour of receiving at Agra, and who after the victorious termination of the first Punjab war, visited the canal

works. He then at last obtained from the Governor-General an adequate financial provision for the work, and thenceforth Cautley sailed with a favouring breeze into the haven of ultimate completion.

Then, being always an educationist, Thomason originated a project of his own. Seeing that there would be a large demand for engineer subordinates in the irrigation department, he resolved to train Natives accordingly. For this purpose he established at Rúrki, most suitably situated near the head-works of the great canal, a College of Civil Engineering for Natives; in which arrangement European non-commissioned officers and other Europeans were afterwards included. Subsequently the institution was enlarged by him, and raised in quality for the reception of commissioned officers, until it became a technical college of a high order. Thus he took the first step on behalf of technical education in northern India.

The Rúrki College is now a structure of imposing dimensions and architectural beauty, in keeping with the high scientific culture for which it is maintained. Its educational resources, its apparatus, its laboratories and workshops, its alumni of varied creeds and colour, its students of many ranks and grades, passing in and out of its courses—all render it one among the technical institutions of the British Empire certainly, and perhaps also of the world. Its situation was interesting from proximity to the Himálaya, but was important, because hard by were the most arduous works in the whole course of the canal. Here, under

the eyes of the students, were the finest models for that profession which they were about to enter. But when Thomason arrived, this College was actually a blank. Stone had to be set upon stone, student had to be added to student, the great operation had to be begun in the humblest way, and to be prosecuted with the most cautious steps. The first Principal was Lieutenant (now General) W. Maclagan, of the Royal Bengal Engineers. He has prepared for this memoir the following sketch:—

'For the Ganges Canal, the Grand Trunk Road and other public works, trained men, Europeans and Natives, were wanted. As a small beginning, Mr. Thomason sent three very capable and successful Native students of the Agra College to be employed under the English engineers of the Ganges Canal, then engaged on the extensive head-works at Hardwár. But as this plan could not within any reasonable time supply the men required, he proposed the establishment of an Engineering College, to train English and Native engineers and subordinates. The proposal received the hearty approval of the Governor-General, Lord Hardinge. The prospectus was issued in a gazette order dated 25th November, 1847. The work of instruction commenced (in tents in the first instance) on the 1st January, 1848, and six months later the College opened in its own buildings. As soon as the students could be carried through the required courses of instruction, it began to supply assistant engineers, overseers, sub-overseers, surveyors, and draftsmen, for the Public Works department.

'Mr. Thomason wished to make the College the means of aiding and stimulating the work of the village schools. The Principal was made also a Visitor of Schools for three

adjoining districts, with the view of helping the masters to understand the object of the College, and to prepare boys for admission to it. The most numerous demands were for Native students of this class, to be surveyors and overseers.

'The idea of the College rose from the Ganges Canal. To a man like Thomason, who could bring to the examination of engineering projects a large amount of accurate technical knowledge, such an undertaking could not fail to be of the highest interest. It was designed to convey from the Ganges, and to spread abroad over thirsty lands, a supply of water enough for an area of 2500 square miles, a splendid provision against uncertain seasons, which it might well delight him to think of. He knew what irrigation canals could do, and he could look forward with confidence to the future of this great work. Within his own province there were canals from the Jumna, on both sides of the river, made by the Muhammadan predecessors of the English Rulers of India. And very precious they were, with all their imperfections.

'The greatest of the works on the Ganges Canal was the aqueduct to carry the great canal stream across the wide sandy channel of the Soláni river,—a channel at one time absolutely dry, at another carrying an impetuous mountain torrent. This aqueduct is near the village of Rúrki, twenty miles from the head of the canal at Hardwár. This place was made the headquarters of the canal. Here the central workshops and foundry were set up. And here Mr. Thomason decided also to plant his Engineering College. The works in progress on the canal, the preparation of materials on a very large scale, and the workshop operations, would furnish useful practical lessons to the College students for years, not ceasing with completion of the works.

'After three years, it was resolved to enlarge the College,—to form a new class for commissioned officers of the army (in

accordance with the suggestion of the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Napier), to add a printing press, also a geological museum, a professional library, and a depôt of surveying and mathematical instruments,—and for these purposes to erect new buildings.

'Mr. Thomason wrote a detailed minute, dated October 3, 1851, explanatory of the past working of the College, and of his proposals for its extension. At the beginning of his printed copy he wrote: "This pamphlet was compiled by myself, and much of the information it contains was drawn from private sources. The completion of the plan which is here sketched out may perhaps devolve upon others, and I am desirous that some record remain of the data on which I found my conclusions. In this interleaved copy will be found references to the private notes and other sources from which the materials were drawn." The occasion came for this memorandum to serve its purpose, and his plans for the College were carried out in every particular.'

In 1872, that is twenty years after its establishment, Sir William Muir visited the College as Lieutenant-Governor, and addressed the students. After reminding them that Thomason had had embodied in his prospectus a sketch of the building as it was to be, he adds :—

'It was one of my earliest acts as his Secretary to affix my name to the prospectus, with the intimation that it had been cordially sanctioned by the Court of Directors. In looking back to the origin of the College, we may well do so with an ever affectionate remembrance of its Founder.'

CHAPTER XI

Public Instruction and General Policy

Public instruction of the higher kinds was found by Thomason to have been fairly well set on foot in his Provinces, in fact excellent colleges existed at Benares, Bareilly, Delhi, Agra [1], and elsewhere; and evidently there would be no difficulty in founding middle-class schools in the principal towns. He rightly anticipated that superior institutions would be best established by private effort, to which grants-in-aid from the State might be accorded. The real desideratum for him was to establish schools in the villages for the mass of the people who lived by the land, under a system of what would be called nowadays elementary education.

He had inherited, as has been shown in chapter II, from his father, a love for education generally, whether superior or elementary. No man understood better than he the adaptation of Western knowledge to the Native mind. No man was more highly qualified than he to lead the Natives on in the way of learning, through their own classical languages. Nevertheless, he saw

[1] He bequeathed to the Agra College his Oriental books, annotated by himself.

that this kind of education would come of itself fast enough. The real crux was, as it still is, to indoctrinate the rural masses with some sense of the value of ordinary knowledge for the success of their own affairs. This knowledge could only be imparted through the Vernacular Languages. Thus it is that Vernacular and Elementary education came to be synonymous terms. This knowledge could never be diffused except through the active agency of the Government. The rural people, consisting chiefly of peasant proprietors, and clever enough in what may be called mental arithmetic, were almost wholly unable to read and write. There was no law empowering authority to compel the attendance of children at school. Still it was hoped that many, though not all, of the parents could be induced to send their children to school to receive rudimentary education.

It has already been shown in previous chapters that Thomason looked to the Registration of Landed Tenures and the Record of Proprietary Rights, as strong incentives to education amidst the rural community. He thought, that unless the peasant proprietors should learn to read the entries regarding their own lands, they could never be fully sure that the record, with the changes occurring from year to year, was fully kept up. He found that this task of elementary education had not yet been attempted in his Provinces. Perhaps it had been regarded as hopeless, but he recognized it as one of the first

duties of the Government. Universality of education in Provinces with forty thousand villages and four millions of peasant proprietors (inclusive of their families), might be beyond his means. But his Government would make a real beginning in every part of the country, which would serve as a veritable example, and might lead to indefinite extension. He thereupon formed a scheme, and carried it out effectually in a number of selected districts. With this actual and visible success as his warrant, he obtained the sanction of the Governor-General in Council to try the plan in all districts throughout his Provinces. These educational proceedings of his affected the mind, not only of the Governor-General in Council, but also of the other Governments throughout India; and gave an impulse to public instruction in the whole empire. Certainly he was the father of elementary education in northern India, and here again is one among the chief trophies of his career.

So much progress has subsequently been made regarding Public Instruction in India, that the dead weight under which Thomason laboured, the prejudice and inertia with which he contended, may seem marvellous. But all that enhances our estimate of his prescience far in advance of his time. He met, too, with opposition from some of his best friends. They held that any such educational scheme as this ought to be accompanied by Christian teaching—and that without this teaching, the scheme would be worse than useless. He gave much the same reply as his

father would have given thirty years previously, to the effect that he was bound to enlighten the people, although he was precluded, as a Governor, from teaching Christianity.

In 1846 he promulgated the result of educational enquiries throughout the country, which proved that 'less than five per cent. of the youths who are of an age to attend school obtain any instruction, and the instruction which they do receive is of a very imperfect kind.' Thereon he framed a scheme, which scheme provided for the examining of all indigenous schools by Government Inspectors, the instituting of scholarships for the most deserving of their pupils, the maintenance of several State schools in the interior of every district to serve as models. Naturally it was desirable to have a school in every village; but if that were impracticable, he would have at least one for each group of neighbouring villages, so that instruction might be obtainable within a reasonable distance, and within reach of every village. His own language was as follows: 'The object is to stimulate the people to exertions on their own part to remove ignorance; the means of effecting this object may be sought in that feature of the Revenue System which provides for the annual registration of landed property'. . .'This scheme contemplates drawing forth the energies of the people for their own improvement, rather than actually supplying to them the means of instruction at the cost of Government. Persuasion, assistance, and encouragement are the means to be

principally supplied.' These words are noteworthy, as showing a tentative method and gentle guidance in a man so energetic in action and so firm in resolution as he.

He expressed himself similarly in a private letter thus:—

'I want to do something in a manner consonant with Native institutions and ideas, and also to induce the people to work with me, and exert themselves in the cause.'

Besides education, which would elevate the rural people morally, he attended to all kind of physical improvement. His care for every imaginable work of public utility was exerted without any respite.

In respect to road-making, as his Provinces lay far inland, he was ever sketching new lines to connect them with neighbouring territories in all directions, and displayed ingenuity in providing resources whereby some beginning, at least, might be made. The Grand Trunk Road, from Calcutta towards the North-West frontier, traversed two-thirds of his Provinces; though partly made and bridged, it had to be macadamized, and in that respect he was of great assistance. But further he would ensure the comfort and security of this channel of communication, this artery of commerce as he loved to call it. So he caused the watch and ward to be strengthened all along the line, police-stations to be placed at frequent intervals, caravanserais and rest-houses to be erected at suitable stages, with store-houses for fuel and other supplies, for the accommodation of travellers. The

importance of all this is now superseded by the railways; but the travellers of to-day can hardly imagine what convenience was afforded to the public of that day by his civilized management of the Grand Trunk Road.

Even more direct and absolute was his authority over the local and provincial works scattered throughout the Provinces. The resources of local taxation were but limited, nevertheless funds of various sorts were found in existence or were formed, and they were by him carefully husbanded. His financial power of supplementing these funds from the treasury was also restricted, still he would ever find some way of helping. Thus he contrived to amass a considerable sum annually for carrying out local improvements. His primary duty was to supervise, but more than this, he actively stimulated and promoted, not only encouraging the local officers, but also framing designs, and striking out new plans. Here his experience of district life at Azamgarh stood him in good stead. But he was able to do for his district officers in their day, much more than had ever been done for him in his day. He managed to leave in most parts of every district some traces of an improving hand; roads and ferries here, schools and benevolent institutions there, and buildings everywhere. He would cause embankments to be formed in countless localities, in order to catch the rain-water and form tanks for irrigation. He would initiate drainage to reclaim the sub-Himálayan swamps. He sanctioned advances of money from the Treasury to be

made to the peasant proprietors for enabling them to undertake these various improvements; and all such loans were honourably repaid. The district officers, officially styled Magistrates and Collectors, have at all times and in all places throughout India, regarded themselves as the patriarchs of their districts and as the stewards for the improvement of their national estates. But never before had this idea been so firmly grasped by any Civil Governor as by Thomason, by none so fully carried into effect.

His police arrangements on the Grand Trunk Road have been already mentioned. This constabulary belonged to what may be called the regular force; besides this, however, there was the watch and ward in every village, existing from time immemorial; and he improved the status and emoluments of these watchmen when the Settlements, already described, were made with the Village Communities, in the certainty that thereby the efficiency and trustworthiness of this rural constabulary would be augmented. He also paid due attention to prison discipline, the question of indoor labour as against outdoor labour was in his time mooted. The sanitation of all the district jails was greatly advanced, and under him was established at Agra a great central prison which for many years served as a model to northern India.

The public health was probably never out of his thoughts during any day in the year. Medical schools and colleges had not yet begun to exist in northern India, still he obtained many trained Natives

from the Calcutta Medical College, and for some he procured a training in his own Provinces. Thus he was enabled to give a great impetus to medical dispensaries both for indoor and outdoor patients. New institutions of this kind were set up in the interior of the country. This had been done elsewhere before, but still a fresh start was made with systematic energy. Similarly great progress was made with vaccination, although the results were disappointing as regards the prevention of small-pox, because the people could not be induced to adopt universally these preventive measures. Nevertheless this prevention was undertaken with marked success in Kumáun. That mountainous region had for generations been the hot-bed of a peculiar plague and of small-pox, which were dreaded by the inhabitants as their worst scourges. The tract being confined within mountain barriers, a cordon could be formed, within which vaccination and other preventive measures would be universal. Soon the mountaineers became more and more free from these ravages, till at length they enjoyed complete immunity. All this was begun and largely carried out in Thomason's time. In later years, so firmly did these mountaineers believe their deliverance from the plague and the small-pox, their malignant deities, to be due to preventive measures including vaccination, that any failure in the arrangements would be resented, and might even lead to grave agitation. These proceedings at Kumáun have subsequently been pointed to as

affording a signal instance of success perfected in a sphere of beneficence.

His own notions of administrative result are thus recorded in a private letter, written after a visit to Ajmere, a detached British district of his, down south amidst the Native States of Rájputána.

'Merwárá is one of our proudest triumphs. The Mers were a wild, ferocious race of plunderers inhabiting that part of the Arávalli Range which stretches from Ajmere to Ûdipur. No neighbouring State could conquer them, they lived on the plunder of the adjacent plains. In the course of about twenty-five years these people have been changed into a race of well-behaved, peaceful and industrious cultivators, themselves the conservators instead of the disturbers of the public peace. Their hills were covered with impenetrable jungle, but now every valley is full of the richest cultivation. The means by which this has been accomplished were simply these. We first thrashed them soundly, then raised a battalion amongst them (to afford employment); and then by a conciliating, just and moderate rule, secured their confidence. Their industry has been stimulated by the construction of numerous solid masonry embankments, which hold up large supplies of water, and afford them the certain means of irrigation and cultivation.'

The inland Customs were protected by a cordon of several hundred miles between the southern border of these Provinces and the main group of Native States. The tariff had comprised scores of articles; and the reduction of this number had been pressed by Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Trevelyan. The matter was taken up by Lord Ellenborough in 1843, when

Thomason as his Secretary drafted the Regulation XIV of that year, which was a complete customs reform, striking off shackles from trade and limiting the dutiable articles to a very small number, the chief article being the salt made in the Native States. Thomason himself, as Lieutenant-Governor, tended the measure with fatherly care. The year after his death, 1854, Mr. M. Hickie, the best witness, thus testified:—

'The lamented Lieutenant-Governor evinced for the Customs Department a solicitude which had never been equally shown before, and gave it his support to the last.'

As a coping stone to all his proceedings, Thomason established a Statistical Department, and periodically published state papers of general interest, in the hope of informing public opinion in respect to his measures. Indeed, he gave an impulse to statistical science in northern India, stronger than anything previously known.

The impression which his personality and policy together might make upon some critical observers from the outside, may be illustrated by two quotations from the diaries of Sir Charles Napier in 1849 and in 1850. On November 4th, Sir Charles, then Commander-in-Chief, writes at Agra:—

'Received here by the Lieutenant-Governor Thomason with a kindness of manner which marks this very distinguished member of the Civil Service. Of him I have heard and seen enough to convince me that he is one of the very few I have

met who take really great views for this noble empire, and who has a head to execute great conceptions.'

The following August Sir Charles writes thus:—

'About the military police the Lieutenant-Governor told me that he was against their formation, because he saw that they would be done away with again: for the same reason, namely the mischief of change, he opposed Lord Hardinge in abolishing them. He is an able and good man, but wants to polish and clean without change.'

As the apex of a pyramid and the pinnacle to a political structure, Thomason regarded loyalty to the Sovereign. In 1851 he seems to have cast a poetic glance towards 1858, when the Empire passed from the East India Company to the Crown direct. In the former year he wrote thus to a young daughter:—

'The Queen. Loyalty in any form is delightful. I am sure it is the safeguard of our country. It is natural that you should wish to see her august person. We expect the people of India to be attached to the Government, that is, the East India Company. But the thing is impossible. No Oriental people ever yet loved an abstract idea. One must have a personal embodiment of the ruling power. That it is which called forth the enthusiasm of you and your brother, and which acts with extraordinary power on the minds of your fellow-subjects.'

CHAPTER XII

The End

The narrative has now reached the year 1853, the year fateful to Thomason. It might at first sight be thought that the shadow of his death, looming near us, hangs as a dark cloud on the horizon. But the premature close of such a life as his should rather be likened to a sunset when the orb of light, having run the appointed course here, seems to dip below our horizon towards a brighter existence beyond.

In the North-Western Provinces he had reached, in 1853, his culminating point of authority and influence after just ten years of government since 1843, and had succeeded in carrying out his policy.

The property of the people in their lands had been securely established. The Record of Rights, with the registration of tenures and interests in the soil, of all kinds and degrees, whether pertaining to owners or cultivators, to landlords or tenants, had, he might fairly believe, been at length completed; and all its multifarious details had been deposited in the public record-offices of the various districts with provision

for yearly rectification according to personal changes. The constitution of those Village Communities, which he loved so well, had been vindicated and upheld. The spectacle of extending cultivation, of expanding trade, of growing population, of increasing domestic comfort in town and country, greeted his observation. The system of irrigation, by canals and other means, which he had persistently recommended to the Governor-General in Council, had been sanctioned, and was far advanced. The development of trunk-roads, the arrangements for the safety, convenience, and accommodation of the internal traffic, both of passengers and goods, had been carried out to his satisfaction. The countless works of provincial and local improvement, by which no locality in these broad regions was left untouched, had amazingly prospered under his immediate eye; and a potent impetus had been given to municipal life everywhere. Though fairly well pleased with the progress of superior and intermediate education, he felt that elementary education was still in its infancy; but a substantial foundation on broad lines had been laid, with a certainty of the super-structure being reared.

The opening of the Ganges Canal had been fixed for an early date in 1854, and he was to preside at that historic ceremony, as being the man who of all others had most ably advocated the principle of irrigation, had been the guiding genius of the scheme and the sustaining fulcrum to Sir Proby Cautley, the engineer and author of the project. Men naturally

hoped that he would live long enough to see the classic stream flow into its new channel.

In the early days of this year (1853) he opened with due ceremony the buildings erected for the College at Benares. His speech[1] on that occasion was one of the latest, if not the very last, of his public utterances. Some passages in it may be quoted as, perhaps, his parting words. Casting his thoughts back to the Cambridge of his youthful recollections, with all her beautiful structures, he says:—

'We feel the necessity of affording, to the ordinary course of daily tuition, every assistance which can be derived to it from extraneous circumstances. Amongst these is the natural effect, upon the mind, of architectural beauty. Those who recollect the influence exercised on the minds of persons in our own country by the buildings in which our Colleges and Schools are placed, will not be disposed to underrate this effect.'

Next, after recounting how to the teaching of Hindu philosophy in Sanskrit had been added 'the correct conclusions of European philosophy,' he proceeds thus:—

'We have not swept over the country like a torrent, destroying all that is found, and leaving nothing but what itself deposited. Our course has rather been that of a gently swelling inundation, which leaves the former surface undisturbed, and spreads over it a richer mould from which the vegetation may derive a new verdure, and the landscape possess a

[1] A printed copy of it is extant in the Library of the India Office in London.

beauty which was unknown before. Such has been our course in the Civil Administration. We examined the existing systems—retained whatever of them we found to be right and just, and then engrafted on this basis new maxims derived from our own institutions. And thus we have succeeded in forming a system, which is generally admitted to have been easy in its operation, and happy in its effect. There is every reason why a similar course should be pursued in philosophy and literature. We have not found the people of this country an ignorant or simple race. They were possessed of a system of philosophy which we could not ignore. Some persons, in the pride of political superiority, may affect to despise it, but it has roused the curiosity and excited the wonder of the learned in all countries of Europe.

'Dr. Ballantyne's publications enable the most superficial reader to discover that it possesses a depth of thought, a precision of expression, and a subtlety of argument, which are amongst God's choicest gifts to his creatures. These may be misused, but they may also be reclaimed, and devoted to the highest purposes. There is no obstacle to the success of this effect, but its innate difficulty. Admitting, however, that it is a desirable end to attain, no difficulty ought to prevent its accomplishment.'

Hereby he indicates a conviction that religious truth must ultimately prevail. But he makes further allusion to religion in these terms:—

'We are here met together this day, men of different races and creeds. If any one section of this assembly had met to dedicate such a building as this to the education of their youth in their own peculiar tenets, they would have given a religious sanction to the act, and would have consecrated the deed by a ceremonial of their faith. But this we cannot do. Unhappily, human opinions, on the subject of

religion, are so irreconcilable that we cannot concur in any one act of worship. The more necessary it is, then, that each man, in his own breast, should offer up his prayer to the god whom he worships, that here morality may be rightly taught, and that here truth, in all its majesty, may prevail. This aspiration may have a different meaning, according to the wishes or belief of the person who forms it; but with many it will point to a new state of things, when a higher philosophy and a purer faith will pervade this land, not enforced by the arbitrary decrees of a persecuting government, not hypocritically professed to meet the wishes of a proselytizing government, but cordially adopted by a willing people, yielding to the irresistible arguments placed before them.'

The catholic charity which breathes through this passage, and its truly Christian purport, are clear enough. Nevertheless, some well-meaning persons objected to his phrase 'each man in his own breast should offer up his prayer to the god whom he worships,' as if he, the Christian Governor addressing a non-Christian audience, had conceded that the heathen gods might be hearers of prayer. This was a misinterpretation of the passage, but with his usual candour he said that had this been foreseen, he would have so framed the expression as to obviate misunderstanding.

Thus glancing over past labours, he doubtless sighed to himself 'Nunc dimittis.' For he must have had some knowledge that the authorities in England contemplated transferring him to another sphere. The Court of Directors, later in the year, nominated him to the Governorship of the Madras Presidency. Such a

step, unanimously taken by a number of men, must have been the result of previous consultation among themselves. They certainly had communicated with the Governor-General on the subject, and they had to obtain the approval of Her Majesty's Government to their nomination of him.

Respecting him the following proceedings took place in England:—

At a Court of Directors,
14th *September*, 1853.

Resolved by the ballot unanimously that James Thomason Esquire, at present Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, be appointed Governor of Madras.

India Board,
28th *September*, 1853

GENTLEMEN,

I have the satisfaction to inform you that Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to signify her approbation of the appointment of James Thomason Esquire, at present Lieut.-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, to the office of Governor of Fort St. George.

I have, &c.,
[sd] C. WOOD.

THE CHAIRS.

Victoria by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, to all to whom these presents shall come, greeting.

Whereas our Commissioners for the affairs of India have represented unto us that the Court of Directors of the East India Company have nominated our trusty and well-beloved James Thomason Esquire to the office of Governor of the Presidency of Fort St. George in the East Indies, and Governor of Fort St. George, now we, taking the same into

our Royal consideration, do hereby, in virtue of the powers in us vested by law, signify our approbation of the appointment of the said James Thomason to the said office accordingly.

Given at our Court at Balmoral this 27th day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty three, and in the sixteenth year of our Reign.

By H. M. Command.

A melancholy interest attaches to these proceedings, for when the Court nominated him he was, though far from well in health, still in the exercise of his public functions. But before the approbation of the Crown could be obtained he was dangerously stricken with sickness. When the Royal Warrant was being signed, he lay on his death-bed, and his hours had to their last minute mounted. But at that juncture, before the establishment of the electric telegraph, the authorities in England knew not of his sickness, nor did he know of his appointment.

So he died on the 27th of September 1853, after only thirty hours of serious illness, with the heavy loading of his State harness still upon him, while the ink was hardly dry on the last despatches signed by his Secretaries, and while the winged posts were carrying his latest orders to all parts of his extensive Provinces.

After his death, the Government of India issued this notification :—

Fort William—Home Department,
3rd *October*, 1853.

NOTIFICATION.—The Most Noble the Governor-General of India in Council is deeply grieved to announce the decease of

the Honourable James Thomason, the Lieut.-Governor of the North-Western Provinces. The Lieut.-Governor has long since earned for himself a name, which ranks him high among the most distinguished servants of the Honourable East India Company.

Conspicuous ability, devotion to the public service, and a conscientious discharge of every duty, have marked each step of his honourable course; whilst his surpassing administrative capacity, his extensive knowledge of affairs, his clear judgment, his benevolence of character and suavity of demeanour, have adorned and exalted the high position which he was wisely selected to fill.

The Governor-General in Council deplores his loss with a sorrow deep and unfeigned—with sorrow aggravated by the regret that his career should have been thus untimely closed, when all had hoped that opportunities for extended usefulness were still before him, and that fresh honour might be added to his name.

The Most Noble the Governor-General in Council directs that the flag shall be lowered half mast high, and that seventeen minute guns shall be fired at the respective seats of government in India, so soon as the present notification shall have been there received.

By Order of the Governor-General of India in Council.

The Governor-General was Lord Dalhousie, who, as mentioned in chapter VII, became well acquainted with him during a sojourn of more than one season at Simla.

When communicating the expected sanction to his scheme for vernacular or elementary education, the Governor-General pays this tribute to his efforts:—

'And while I cannot refrain from recording anew in this place my deep regret that the ear which would have heard this welcome sanction given, with so much joy, is now dull in death, I desire at the same time to add the expression of my feeling, that even though Mr. Thomason had left no other memorial of his public life behind him, this system of general vernacular education, which is all his own, would have sufficed to build up for him a noble and abiding monument of his earthly career.'

The Governor-General in Council then recommended to the Court of Directors in London that a Scholarship should be founded in memory of Thomason at the College of Civil Engineering at Rúrki, which has already been described, in order 'to keep alive among future generations of public servants the influence of his great example.' This is represented to the Court as 'an appropriate memorial of one of the best and ablest men it has ever counted in the distinguished body of its public servants.' The Court, while approving this proposal, considered that 'the opportunity should be taken of connecting his memory with the Rúrki College in a more emphatic manner, and that an institution of such peculiar importance to India, and of a character so entirely novel in that country, should bear the name of its founder.' They accordingly directed that the College should henceforth be designated the 'Thomason College of Civil Engineering at Rúrki.'

Further, the Court of Directors bore this testimony, on receiving the official news of his death:—

'Mr. Thomason had obtained distinction in the several stages of his official progress; and as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, during a period of nine years, he exhibited all the qualities of an accomplished and successful administrator. He omitted no research, and spared no pains to make himself master of every subject that came before him, however minute or however comprehensive. His decisions, founded on results so obtained, were clearly, concisely and impressively delivered. He inculcated and maintained discipline in the public service by the discernment with which he observed and rewarded merit, by a rare union of conciliation and firmness, by uniform kindness and courtesy to those below him, and by his own marked example of deference to superior authority. In his administration of the territorial revenue, an efficient watchfulness over the just interests of the State was always tempered by a benevolent care for the well-being of the agricultural community. We are persuaded that all classes who lived under his government, from the highest public servant to the cultivator of the soil, must participate in the sorrow which we feel for his loss.'

Apart from official commendation of him in the highest quarters, it is of interest to note the best non-official opinion at that time. The leading newspaper then in the country was 'The Friend of India,' established by Marshman and published at Serampur, near Calcutta. The following extract is from an obituary notice which appeared on the 13th of October, 1853:—

'It is not in a barren record of incidents that the biography of such a man as Mr. Thomason consists. It is rather in a minute detail of the process by which he contrived to brace up the administration, till it became the model

Government of Asia, and while rendering it strong to the point of despotism, retained the affection of the people who obeyed it.

'While carrying out a plan for the irrigation of an immense territory, reforming the prison discipline, or debating the possibility of constructing railways by the State, he never forgot that the success of a centralized government depends upon smaller arrangements. He would walk into the record room of a collectorate, take down a bundle of vernacular proceedings, detect at a glance if they had been properly arranged, and remark upon the orders passed by the collector. He would enter a medical dispensary, examine the book of cases, gladden the heart of the Native surgeon by a few pertinent remarks, and perhaps set him thinking on the properties of a drug, procurable in the bazaar, and relied upon by the Native physicians, but unknown to English physicians. He would question a Native revenue officer about the condition of his villages, and remark upon the effect of a hail-storm which had lately occurred in some village under his control. Every officer was aware that with him generalities were of no avail, that the Governor knew more of his district than he did himself, and that his own best policy was to point out deficiencies.'

Among surviving witnesses is Mr. Robert Needham Cust, late of the Civil Service. His remembrance has been recorded thus :—

'I made the acquaintance of Mr. James Thomason when he was Secretary to the Government of India in the Foreign Department in 1843. I was his guest at Agra in Government House in June, 1844, and there I became aware of his remarkable character, and conceived that love and respect for him, which exist to this day. I was struck by his holy demeanour, his teachings on revenue matters, his conversation about

canals, popular education, and Christian missions. In 1845 he was in his camp, and I accompanied him in his march through the Cis-Sutlej States. As at Agra, so in camp, I was deeply impressed with his mild wisdom and interesting conversation. On my return from England in 1852 I was placed at his disposal, and I went up to Agra to stay with him. I had gained in knowledge and experience since 1844, and could more fully appreciate his administrative wisdom and sweet character.

'Among the many great Indian Statesmen, with whom during my twenty-five years in India I came into contact, I place him very high indeed. He was devoid of personal ambition. He had no special gift of eloquence, and never published any literary work. But he systematized the Revenue system of the North-West Provinces, and improved every branch of the administration. He also set the example to the newly conquered province of the Punjab, which was managed from the first by his favourite subalterns, Lawrence, Montgomery, Macleod, Barnes, Edward Thornton, who were in their full maturity, and by a succession of younger men, who had learnt their lesson from him, had been the recipients of his friendly notice, and made his holy life their great example. In 1888 I dedicated to his memory a volume of my notes on Missionary Subjects, as one "who taught me my lesson."'

The following description was written very shortly after his death by William Muir, afterwards Sir William, who had intimate acquaintance with him, official and private, had been his principal Secretary since 1851, and who himself became subsequently Lieutenant-Governor, and is now Principal of the University of Edinburgh [1].

[1] See *Calcutta Review*, December, 1853.

We may well enquire what secret charm it was which lent to almost every department of his administration so distinguishing an efficiency and greatness. . . . There was, indeed, in him a rare power of deliberation and judgment, an unusual faculty of discernment and research. Yet, these were mainly the result of studious habit, and earnest purpose. It was by labour that everything was perfected—conscientious, unceasing, daily labour; by a wakeful anxiety that knew no respite; by a severity of thought, ever busy and ever prolific in the devising of new arrangements, and the perfecting of old. Yet his mind was so beautifully balanced, that this unwearied work and never-ceasing tension produced no irregularity of action, and no fretful or impatient advance. All was even, serene, powerful.'

Looking back after so long a period, Sir William now writes:—

'When I wrote this description of Thomason in 1853, the close relation in which I had lived with him as my Chief, and Guide of my life as his Secretary, might be supposed to have unduly magnified him in my eyes. Yet in the long interval that has since elapsed and the large acquaintance I have had with Statesmen both in India and at home, I can truly say that my conception of his virtues and commanding position as a wise and illustrious Governor as well as an exemplary Christian, and faithful friend, has only been heightened by the lapse of time, and that I regard him as the best of Rulers it has been my lot to be associated with.'

It is hard to describe the blank that his death suddenly left in his own Provinces. Striking and pathetic were the words that burst from the lips, or flowed from the pens, of God-fearing friends and

officers—'the mighty fallen'—'the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof'—'the overwhelming wave of dismay'—'the lightning has struck a cedar'—'the sainted ruler'—'in the midst of worldly state One has said, friend, come up higher.' Some civil servants even wore mourning crape for several weeks. Inexpressibly deeper was the grief of the three children gathered for a brief while under the friendly roof of Dr. Murray at Agra, the daughter suddenly left alone in the new world which she had but recently entered, the young son just come to find the paternal home turned into a house of mourning, the elder son deprived of guidance in the opening of his career. What must they have felt on re-entering the Government House, quitted but three weeks before, to gather up the writings, the books, the pictures, the familiar mementos of the departed. With what tears must she have read again the preface to the manuscript book which was to be for her 'a silent but powerful monitor when the hand can no longer write nor the mouth speak.'

Later on there sounded the echo of national mourning when in the following spring the Ganges water was led into its new channel, and the thoughts of those standing around the scene were turned in regret and sorrow to the Ruler, who had not been spared to see the desire of his eyes and the success for which he had long travailed.

The following account is given by Mr. John Walter Sherer, who was then Assistant Secretary to the Government at Agra:—

'The news of his unexpected death spread consternation at Agra. The despatches had been communicated to me and men crowded in to ask "Can it be possible?" One old judicial officer, who had been placed over the Government Press, entered abruptly and exclaimed "Tell me, it is not true." The reply was "Too true, I fear."

'His countenance fell. "Then my career is ended" he cried, and without a further word departed.

'Yes, Mr. Thomason was dead. The loss was ours not his. He had, to use Sadi's words, so lived that when the drum beat in the struggling light for striking the tent, he was ready for the march.

'A high-minded gentleman had disappeared, far-seeing, capable, industrious, not to be baffled by difficulties.

'But more:—he was an enthusiast,—an idealist—his heart was warm, his affections were sincere and constant, his friendship was not lightly bestowed, but tender and trusting where he gave it.

'And because he possessed these latter characteristics,—he was beloved!'

A meeting of the principal inhabitants, European and Native, was convened at Agra in the Metcalfe Hall. His career was eulogized by many speakers with the natural eloquence that wells up from full hearts, and steps were taken to establish a permanent memorial.

The Natives of northern India had not yet learnt the practice of public demonstration, and their sentiments regarding the void caused by his death may have been hard to gauge; but they have ever noticed the personal characteristics of their European rulers far more intently than is commonly imagined. And

though the masses, for whom he had so jealously worked, knew him chiefly by common fame as a mighty and beneficent ruler, nevertheless there were large classes who in their own phrase said that by his death they had 'lost a father.' Many individuals among them cherished a regretful sorrow for him to their lives' end.

Next after his own Provinces, his deatn caused the greatest sensation in the Punjab, where he was specially admired and respected by John Lawrence, where he had been looked upon by the Lawrence school as a master of the administrative art, where the principal civil servants had served under him, and where many of the junior civilians might almost be called his disciples. Robert Montgomery, who was second in command there, felt for him a love passing the love of brethren. He exclaimed—'Would that I could in any way repay all that Thomason has done for me!' And Montgomery was a man whose affections would be engaged only by some strong cause. He himself rose to greatness, and evinced cool intrepidity in the face of public peril.

The subjoined note, on the meeting called in the Punjab, is furnished by Sir Henry Davies [1], who was present on the occasion:—

'The news of Mr. Thomason's death was received in the Punjab with great regret. Most of the senior civilians had served under him in the North-West Provinces, and were

[1] He was afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and has been a Member of the Council of India in London.

instrumental in introducing into the newly annexed territories, with some modifications, the system of administration then brought to maturity. Many of the junior officers were personally known to him, as it was his custom to invite them to stay with him on their first joining their appointments after leaving Calcutta. In a previous year he had extended his cold weather tour to the Punjab, and had evinced a warm interest in its administrative progress, more especially in the settlement of the land revenue, then in hand, which was in a great degree founded on his own views and directions. There was, therefore, something more than a mere recognition of the high qualities of the deceased Governor in the public meeting immediately held at Amritsar, under the presidency of Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Edmonstone, and in the resolution arrived at, to create some permanent memorial of his public career.'

It only remains to describe the passing, the ending of Thomason's life.

The summer of 1853 he spends at Agra, his headquarters. His eldest son, James, is of age and has arrived; he says that at the sight of the young man's successful entrance on a public career 'he feels like the father who hears a son make his first speech in the senate, or preach his first sermon from the pulpit, or conduct his first case in court.' He calls to mind how 'his father had taken him to his arms in 1822, and had thereafter been spared for seven years of life —he now, in his turn, takes his son—will he be spared for seven years?'

His eldest daughter, Maynie, is married—but the second, Bessie, has been expected to come and fill the

place of hostess in Government House—he looks across the festive table at her place, and 'thanks the God, Who had bereaved him of his wife, for having blessed him with the daughter,'—still, after fourteen years, lamenting the bereavement. She has in January, 1853, joined his camp with all its imposing circumstances on the Ganges bank, radiant with hopes that were, after nine short months, to be dashed and shivered.

On May 4, 1853, he is forty-nine years old. Writing to Montgomery, he alludes in cheerful strain to 'entering the Jubilee year of one's life. How must the retrospect humble one, and the prospect stir one up to greater diligence and devotion to God's service.' He adds, 'By this time next year I may have all my five children around me in India.' Of the seven, the 'little flock' spoken of by the mother, two had died, three were in India, one (Charles) was in England, and one was coming out[1]. So he hoped that at length, fifteen years after his irreparable loss, the family circle, though bereft of its graceful head, would yet be re-united. But this happiness was not to be vouchsafed to him.

During the summer of this year the heat was intense and the rainfall late in coming. As the season wore

[1] This one was William, who landed at Calcutta later in the year, only to learn that the father he had come to meet was dead. He subsequently entered into Holy Orders in England, held a parish in Lincolnshire, and died in 1870. Some of his sermons are extant, suited indeed to a rural congregation, but breathing the spirit and informed with the style of his grandfather Thomas Thomason

on he became enfeebled and indisposed. About the 1st of August he consulted Dr. Murray, one of the ablest physicians in northern India, who found him to be affected by a low fever, without any marked symptom, and without any specific ailment or other complication. As he did not improve under treatment, he was advised by Murray to proceed immediately to the Himálaya, as the only means of shaking off the febrile affection; and as the time went on still without improvement, this advice was repeated with increasing urgency. He replied that his work rendered this inconvenient for the present, that he had arranged to visit the Himálaya late in September and that he did not wish to leave his headquarters sooner, unless Murray could say that there was immediate danger to his health. As this could not exactly be said, he deferred his departure for a while and adhered to his arrangements. Had he followed the medical advice, there would have been a chance for the prolongation of his life. But he worked on during the heat at Agra, and early in September he decided to visit his daughter Maynie, at Bareilly, where her husband, Dr. Hay[1], was Civil Surgeon, taking that station on his way to the Himálaya. As yet no alarm was felt either by himself or his family circle, consisting of his son James,

[1] He was killed in Bareilly at the post of duty during the Mutiny, May, 1857. After his death Mrs Hay married, in 1860, Surgeon-Major J. J. Clifford of H. M. 9th Lancers, and died in 1868, in Lincolnshire.

then in the Covenanted Civil Service, and of his second and unmarried daughter Bessie.

In fact he is nearing the portal of that eternity which he had reverently yet hopefully foreshadowed to himself in almost every letter of consequence written to his nearest relatives during many years past. But, like other rulers, conscious of the great issues that depended upon him, and loth to rouse public alarm, he hesitates to admit that he is ill. He says nothing of this in a letter to Montgomery of 25th August. He mentions his plans for the tour in the coming winter, and his engagement at Rúrki for the Ganges Canal in the spring. This is fated to be his last letter to the brother best beloved.

All this while, heat and weakness notwithstanding, he had been writing out with his own hand extracts from religious works in the manuscript book already mentioned, which he had begun at the suggestion of his daughter Maynie. As the season advances these entries seem to increase, as if his soul felt itself being gradually dissociated from affairs of state, and turning towards the things that are beyond mortal vision. The last Sunday but two before he started was the 28th of August. On that day he wrote out no less than four passages, entering them in different parts of the book, on the high subject of spiritual-mindedness; the extracts being all from Owen's work on this subject. The passages are too long to cite, but a very few sentences from each of them may be given, in order to show the tenor of his thoughts.

'There is no lawful calling in life that absolutely excludes spiritual-mindedness from them engaged in it; nor is there any that doth necessarily include it. Men may be in the meanest employments, and be possessed of the grace, and others may be in the best and highest, and nevertheless be destitute thereof.'

'He that can bring into this treasure only the mites of broken desires and ejaculated prayers, so they be his best, shall not come behind them who cast into it out of their greater abundance of skill and ability.'

'When the soul labours for communion with God, but rushes into confused thoughts, yet if the Christian looks to God for relief, his mourning will be accepted.'

'Unskilful men may cast away rough, unwrought diamonds, not knowing to what a polishing would bring them, so men unskilful in the mysteries of godliness, do not perceive there can be any glory in rough, unwrought grace, ignorant of that lustre and beauty which the polishing of the Heavenly hand will give unto it.'

It will be remembered that spiritual-mindedness formed a particular part of the teaching which as a youth at Cambridge he had received from Simeon.

He started early in September for Bareilly, accompanied by Bessie, but James [1] remained behind at Agra on duty. This place is the capital of Rohilkhand, on the other side of the Ganges from Agra, and distant less than 150 miles. By the travelling of

[1] A Civil Servant of high promise, who had inherited much of the paternal talent and disposition, with a prospect of emulating his father's career had he lived. He was killed during the mutinous outbreak at Muhamdi in Oudh, May 1857. His old Master at Rugby, afterwards Bishop Cotton, placed a tablet in his memory in the Cathedral at Calcutta.

that time, the journey occupied three days, or rather three nights, for he rested during the heat of the day in a staging house, and travelled in a palanquin borne by men as bearers during the cool of the night. His weakness immediately appeared in the distress caused by the jolting of the palanquin, and the second of the three nights was passed by him in discomfort. Reaching Bareilly on the 16th of September he alighted at his daughter's house, receiving the best possible care from his son-in-law. After his arrival, he was more than ordinarily fatigued, and instead of receiving, as was his wont, officers and visitors who came to pay their respects (according to custom when a Governor visits a station), he remained in his rooms for several days with books and papers, despatching current business, in correspondence as usual with his Secretaries.

There is extant a description of his own health given at this time by himself in a letter to Mr. Henry Carre Tucker, of the 20th of September.

'I came over here in hopes of benefit, but have not as yet been successful. The journey completely prostrated me, and I have been obliged hitherto to deny myself to all visitors, and to give up all business that I can possibly avoid. I have no specific illness but loss of appetite, loss of strength, loss of power for any exertion whatever, symptoms of the frailty of the tabernacle in which we dwell. We know that it must be dissolved, how, or *how soon* we do not know. Let us be sure that we have another building, not made with hands, ready to receive us.'

He then decided to visit Náini Tál, a beautiful health-resort, recently established, on the margin of a lake embosomed amidst woods and mountains in the Himálayan ranges overlooking Rohilkhand. He had fixed the 28th for his departure thither, little thinking that his life was not to last till then; and he had actually despatched his Chief Secretary, William Muir, to Murádábád to meet him on the way from Bareilly to Náini Tál. By Sunday, the 25th, he had somewhat rallied, and was so far improved as to debate whether he would not attend church; but after some hesitation he refrained from going out. Dr. Hay and Bessie went to afternoon church, while he stayed at home with Maynie. He read aloud to her the Service for the day; neither of them apprehended that this was the last time he would ever recite the sacred passages. That evening at tea-time he seemed quite cheerful to both his daughters, wishing them good-night with all his usual affection, and without any idea that this was the last time of his bidding them an ordinary farewell.

He retires to rest as usual, but somewhat before midnight is seized with violent and acute trouble internally, which, in reference to the region of the pain, is pronounced to be colic. He receives every possible aid from Hay during the night, and towards the morning becomes composed. But the pain departing leaves some deadly mischief behind it, so he is exhausted, prostrated and unable to take nourishment. Soon after eight o'clock he sends for Bessie and asks

her to read to him some of the many letters that had come by that morning's post, which she does. But his strangely altered aspect and feeble, almost inarticulate, utterance alarm her. After a while, at his request, she reads to him the 25th and 26th chapters of Isaiah. Doubtless he chose these chapters because he recollected the texts contained in them, as applicable to himself, lying sick unto death in India, and he hears them again in these supreme hours of his life—'the heat in a dry place, even the heat with the shadow of a cloud'—'he will swallow up death in victory'—'thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee'—'the dead shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.' Then he lapses into a half-slumber for some hours. Awaking he is found to be dangerously weak, still unable to take nourishment, and apprehensive of any movement lest it should resuscitate the agony of the previous night. Great and increasing trouble ensues upon every effort he makes to speak. Considering all this, Hay calls in a second medical man, and they both pronounce him to be in a critical and precarious condition; this aggravates the fears that had been oppressing his daughters all day. When bed-time arrives he does not receive them to wish them good-night. Soon afterwards Hay perceives a further change, arouses them with a hurried intimation that their father is sinking, and takes them to his bed-side about an hour before midnight. Seeing them enter at this unusual hour, he asks Hay, 'Have you summoned them?' and the

answer is, 'Yes.' He at once says: 'Then you must think me in a bad way—tell me your real opinion of my case, for I am not afraid to die.' Hay tells him that his condition is most precarious, and that if he continues losing strength and unable to take any nourishment, he cannot long survive. He is unwilling that his daughters should sit up with him, and begs them to go to bed with the promise that Hay shall call them if any further change for the worse should be perceptible. Soon they are summoned again, but they can scarce believe that the summons is to a death-bed. His countenance has become more natural in its expression, his manner serene, his voice stronger and his utterance undisturbed. He first gives them a few directions regarding personal and family affairs, in a precise and collected manner. He takes one of their hands in each of his own and says, 'John (Hay) must know best—but I do not feel so ill—God's will be done.' On being informed that the clergyman is absent on leave, he expresses his regret that the Holy Communion cannot be administered. He then bids Bessie read to him the last chapter of Galatians, telling her and Maynie that their mother had laid this chapter much to heart. Evidently his memory had reverted to the reading of this chapter to his wife, at her own request, just before death. The passage is read, and he hears once more the well-remembered texts—'God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap'—'he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit also reap life everlasting'—'Jesus

Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world'—'I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.' These are the last passages from the Word of God which he hears on earth. Presently he says with entire peacefulness: 'I have passed an unworthy life, but I do not trust in my own righteousness—God is very gracious.' Yet again he seeks for comfort, and asks Bessie to repeat the first verses of Keble's hymn for the twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity, which he had transcribed for her during his sojourn at Simla, and now feels to be attuned in harmony with his own mind, so he hears:—

> Why should we faint and fear to live alone
> Since all alone, so Heav'n has willed, we die;
>
> Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe
> Our hermit spirits dwell and range apart;
>
> And well it is for us our God should feel
> Alone our secret throbbings—so our prayer
> May readier spring to Heaven.

These are the last lines of human poetry that fall upon his ear. He bids them all his final farewell, desiring them now to leave him, so that he may be alone at the end. His closing words to Bessie[1]—now to become an orphan—are to commend her to the care of her brother James, absent at Agra.

His daughters departed, he is alone with Hay, to whom he makes only one request, that his funeral

[1] On her own death-bed at Náini Tál, eleven years later, she evinced the sweet fortitude learnt from her father, and declared her assurance of rejoining him.

shall be private. Then he causes Hay to read the Order in the Prayer Book for the Visitation of the Sick. After the articles of faith, as therein prescribed, have been rehearsed, he answers 'All this I steadfastly believe,' in a voice so clear and decided that it can be heard outside his room. These are the last words that he utters, in the early hours after midnight. He has full possession of his faculties, and seems to be free from distress. His eyes glance to notice everything around, while Hay keeps a solitary vigil by the bed-side. Soon the pains of death begin to get hold upon him. He is athirst, and half-articulately asks, or rather makes signs, for water. He breathes laboriously, the respirations are more and more lengthened till they are like long-drawn sighs. Near dawn they subside, growing gentler and gentler, so that Hay can scarcely distinguish the moment when they cease, as the spirit passes.

In India, at this season, burial takes place soon after death; this is the morning of Tuesday (27th September), and the funeral is fixed for the evening of the following day (28th) with the simplicity befitting the man, but with a long line of mourners, and troops of sorrowing friends. From the house the coffin is conveyed in a hearse drawn by artillery horses to the Church. It is set there, while the Chaplain (from a neighbouring station) reads the Burial Service; the pall-bearers being four Civil Servants on the one side, and four Military Officers on the other. Thence six Native

Christian drummers from the Regiment carry it to the grave in the Church enclosure. In the East the closing stages of human life are startling in their shortness. There have been but six hours of acute illness, twenty-four of sinking, thirty-six hours of interval between decease and burial; in all sixty-six hours from comparative convalescence to the very grave. For the survivors, this dread celerity of events deepens the gloom of the chasm that has been riven by death.

Dying in the Mauritius, more than twenty years before, Thomas Thomason the father, alluding to human life, its course and end, its race and goal, humbly said: 'This is a dark valley, but there's light at the end.' More truly may it be said of him, as of James Thomason the son dying in northern India. that there was light all the way.

INDEX

ABDÚL-MASÍH, miniature of, sent to Simeon, 34.

ABUL FAZL, the Moslem, guide, philosopher and friend of Akbar, 80.

AGRA, James Thomason appointed Secretary to Government at, 61: James Thomason's description of his house at, 71. Capital of the Mughals, 75: Thomason's headquarters during his tours, 113: College for higher education at, 170.

AKBAR, founder of the Mughal Empire, 75: sets up his throne at Agra, 75: his good rule, 80: his minister Todar Mall, 80: 'Dream of,' by Tennyson, quoted, 137.

ALÍGARH, storming of the Arsenal at, 81.

ALLAHÁBÁD, James Thomason visits his sister Mrs. Montgomery at, 70. headquarters of the N. W. Provinces, 75: conclave held in 1833 at, 85: American missionaries at, 130.

AMHERST, Earl of, Governor-General in James Thomason's time, 46.

AQUEDUCT of the Ganges canal near Rúrki, 168.

ARABIC, Thomas Thomason's proficiency in, 27.

ASPEDEN SCHOOL, or Aspenden, 38, 39.

AUCKLAND, Lord, Governor-General in James Thomason's time, 47.

AURANGZEB, the last of the effectively powerful, though not the last of the titular Great Mughals, 80.

AZAMGARH, James Thomason appointed Magistrate and Collector of, 52: his description of, 55, 56: its products, 56

BALHAM, James Thomason's sister at, 48, 49.

BAREILLY, James Thomason died at, 10: college for higher education at, 170.

BARNES, George, served under Thomason, 101.

BENARES, described by Rev. T. Thomason, 30: college for higher education at, 170, 183.

BENGAL PRESIDENCY, its dimensions, 43, 50, 51.

BENTINCK, Lord William, Governor-General, in James Thomason's time, 46: the Settlement of the N.-W. Provinces in 1833, 85.

BIRD, Robert Merttins, Member of Revenue Board, 71: his intercourse with James Thomason, 71, 72: work in connexion with Grand Trigonometrical Survey, 85: Settlement of the Provinces, 86–89.

BRÁHMAN, the priestly caste of ancient India, 82: Brâhman

soldiery came from Oudh rather than Hindustán, 82.
Buxár, battle of, 81.

Calcutta, James Thomason arrives as a child at, 27: Mission Church at, 27: James Thomason arrives in 1822 at, 41, 43, 47: Medical College at, 177.
Cam, river, 24.
Cambridge, 23, 24, 35, 36.
Campbell, Sir George, served under Thomason, 101.
Canal Works in the 'Great Dry Tract,' 163: on the Jumna, 163: on the Ganges at Hardwár, 73, 164.
Cautley, Sir Proby, engineer of the Ganges Canal, 164.
Ceded and Conquered Provinces, 81.
Charlton, James Thomason's wife buried at, 68.
Church Missionary Society, 32, 35, 130.
Clerk, Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Lieutenant-Governor of North-Western Provinces, 73.
College, Hindu, for higher education of natives, 32: Engineering, at Rúrki, 166: for higher education at Benares, Bareilly, Delhi, Agra, &c., 170: Medical, at Calcutta, 177.
Court of Directors, appointed Thomason Governor of the Madras Presidency in 1853, 185: but before he received the intimation he died, 187: their testimony of him, 189.
Courts of Justice, independent in action and decision of Lieutenant-Governor, 93.
Cust, Robert Needham, served under Thomason, 101, quoted, 191, 192.
Customs, inland, protected, 178.

Dalhousie, Marquess of, Governor-General in James Thomason's time, 47, 188
Davies, Sir Henry, served under Thomason, 101: describes the reception in the Punjab of the news of Thomason's death, 196.
Delhi, described by the Rev. Thomas Thomason, 31: taken by the Maráthás, 81: battle at, 81: brought under the British rule in 1832, 81: college for higher education at, 170.
'Directions to Collectors,' published by James Thomason to help District Officers to administer the land revenue, 99, 140–148.
'Directions to Settlement Officers,' by James Thomason, 99, 144–146.
Doáb, tract in the heart of N.-W. Provinces, 107.
Dornford, Mrs., James Thomason's grandmother, friend of Simeon's, 22: died in 1835, 23: inscription to her memory by Simeon, 23.

East India Company, Henry Martyn Chaplain of, 26: appoints James Thomason a member of their Covenanted Civil Service in Bengal, 41: important offices filled by members of, 92: surrenders the Empire to the Crown in 1858, 180.
Edmonstone, Sir George, served under Thomason, 101.
Elementary Education, 171–173.
Ellenborough, Lord, Governor-General in James Thomason's time, 47, 72: land revenue, 157 customs reform, 178, 179.
Engineering College at Rúrki, 166–169: visited by Sir William Muir, 169.

Fatehgarh, battle of, 81: American Missionaries at, 130.

FATEHPUR SÍKRI, country seat of Akbar, 114.
FAWCETT, Miss, of Scaleby Castle, marries Thomas Thomason, 23.
FOREIGN SECRETARY to Government of India, James Thomason appointed, 72.
FORT WILLIAM, College of, James Thomason studied at, 48.
'FRIEND OF INDIA,' leading newspaper established by Marshman and published at Serampur, 190: extract from, 190–191.

GANGES, Canal works near Hardwár, 73.
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, Thomason's life at, 119–135.
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS, religious teaching not allowed in, 129.
GRAND TRUNK ROAD, 167, 176.
GRAND TRIGONOMETRICAL SURVEY, 85.
GRANT, Mr. and Mrs., parents of James Thomason's wife, 26, 48, 49
GRANT, Miss, married James Thomason, 48, 49.
GRANT, Charles, one of the founders of the Church Missionary Society, 49.
GRANT, Charles, afterwards Lord Glenelg, 49.
GRANT, Mrs. Isabella, 67.
GREAT SHELFORD, *see* SHELFORD.
GUJARS, a predatory caste, 82.
GWALIOR, impending war at, 119.

HAILEYBURY COLLEGE, James Thomason enters, 41.
HALE, Sir Matthew, quoted, 117–118.
HARDINGE, Lord, Governor-General in James Thomason's time, 47: visited Ganges Canal works, 165.
HARDWÁR, Canal works on the Ganges near, 73, 164.
HAY, Dr. John, married Thomason's daughter Maynard and lived at Bareilly, where Thomason died, 199, 202, 203.
HICKIE, Mr. M., quoted, 179.
HINDUSTÁN, the Empress Province of India, 76: its climate, 78 ancient history of, 79–82 · under the reign of the Mughals, 80, 81: under the East India Company, 81.
HODSON, Mr, (afterwards Archdeacon) receives James Thomason at Stansted, 40.
'HORAE HOMILETICAE,' Simeon's great work, 35, 36–37.
HÚGHLÍ, described, 44, 45.
HUTCHINSON, Mrs., James Thomason's sister Eliza, 48.

IRRIGATION by canals, 163–169: in the 'Great Dry Tract,' 163. on the Jumna, 163: Ganges canal, 164.

JAHÁNGÍR, Akbar's son, 80.
JATS, industrious cultivators, 82.
JEWS, Simeon's evangelizing efforts regarding the, 41.
JOHNSTON, William, married James Thomason's daughter Elizabeth, 136 (footnote).
JOINT RESPONSIBILITY, 151.
JUMNA, irrigation works on the, 163
JUNGLE MAHALS or districts, James Thomason appointed judge in, 51.

KAYÁSTH, the writer caste of Hindustán, 82.
KING'S COLLEGE, Cambridge, 35–36.
KUMÁUN, non-regulation district, 93: sanitation in, 177.

LAND TAX, the administration of, 93, 138–160.
LAND REVENUE, 94–100.
LAWRENCE, John (afterwards Lord), served under James

Thomason, 101: admired and respected Thomason, 196.
LITTLE SHELFORD, *see* SHELFORD.

MACAULAY, Thomas Babington, 25, 39, 40.
MACKENZIE, Holt, attempts reforms in 1822, 85
MACLAGAN, General, his account of Rúrki, 167.
MACLEOD, Sir Donald, served under Thomason, 101.
MACNAGHTEN, William Hay, examined James Thomason in Muhammadan Law, 51.
MADRAS PRESIDENCY, Thomason appointed Governor in 1853, but died before he received the intimation, 185–187.
MAGDALENE COLLEGE, Cambridge, 23.
MAGISTRATE and Collector of Azamgarh, work of, 52–64.
MALDAH, James Thomason married at, 49.
MANUSCRIPT BOOK, quotations from James Thomason's, 62, 126–128, 201.
MARÁTHÁS, rise of the, 81: took Delhi, 81.
'MARCHES,' Thomason's tours through the provinces, 102–110.
MARSHMAN, established 'The Friend of India,' 190.
MARTYN, Henry, 26.
MATHRA-BRINDÁBAN, classic tract in Hindu mythology, 110.
MAURITIUS, Thomas Thomason died at, 49, 208.
MEDICAL COLLEGE at Calcutta, 177.
MEERUT, Church Mission at, 130.
MERS OF MERWÁRÁ, described in a private letter of Thomason's, 178.
METCALFE HALL, meeting convened at Agra on Thomason's death to establish a memorial, 195.
METCALFE, Sir Charles, afterwards Lord, expresses the thanks of government publicly to James Thomason when he left the Secretariat, 52: Lieutenant-Governor at Agra, 61, 75: retires in 1837, 71: upheld the Village Communities, 83, 84.
MILITARY BOARD, managed the public works, 92.
MISSION CHURCH, or Old Church, at Calcutta, 27.
MISSIONARIES, at Allahábád, Fatehgarh, and Meerut, 130: Thomason's support of, 132.
MOIRA, Earl of, Governor-General, 28.
MONTGOMERY, Mrs., James Thomason's sister Frances, 48: died, 73.
MONTGOMERY, Sir Robert, served under Thomason, 101: afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, 101, 102: his love for Thomason, 196.
MORRIS, Sir John, served under Thomason, 101.
MUGHAL EMPIRE, founded by Akbar, 75: throne set up at Agra, 75.
MUIR, Sir William, served under Thomason, 101: now Principal of University of Edinburgh, 101: quoted, 111 (footnote), 112: describes Thomason, 192, 193.
MURRAY, Dr., at Agra, 194, 199.

NÁINI TÁL, James Thomason's daughter Bessie married at, 136. died at, 206 (footnote).
NAPIER, Sir Charles, quoted, his description of Thomason, 179, 180.
NARBADÁ, part of the N.-W. Provinces, non-regulation district, 93.
NEPAL, war with, 81.
NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES, James Thomason appointed Lieutenant-Governor of, 73: provinces described, 74–79, 91–118: settlement, 138–161:

irrigation of, 162–169: public instruction and policy in, 170–179.

OUDH, James Thomason's march through, 61: not included in N.-W. Provinces, 74. Oudh as a native State, 75

OUSELEY, examined James Thomason in Muhammadan Law, 51.

PINDÁRÍ WAR in 1818, 81.

PRESTON, Rev. Mr., coadjutor of Simeon's, 25: removed to Aspeden, 26, 38: appointed to a living in 1825, 39.

PROPRIETARY RIGHT described by James Thomason, 59, 60, 145–148.

PUNJAB annexed, 45: war in Punjab, 103, 121: visited by Thomason in 1851, 116.

QUEEN, The, Thomason mentions in a private letter, 180.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, Cambridge, 23.

RAIKES, Charles, served under Thomason, 101.

RÁJPUTS, invasions of the, in Azamgarh, the foundation of the existing proprietary right, 59. the chivalrous caste, 82.

REGULATIONS, laws framed by the Governor-General in Council called, 93.

REVENUE BOARD, James Thomason became Member of, 71.

REVENUE CODE, begun by James Thomason but left unfinished at his death, 100, 139.

ROBERTSON, Mr., Lieutenant-Governor, 71: retired, 73.

'ROSE AND THE LOTUS,' the, by Thomason's daughter Elizabeth, mentioned, 135.

RÚRKI, Engineering College at, 166–169: aqueduct of the Ganges Canal near, 168: afterwards called 'Thomason College of Civil Engineering at Rúrki,' 189.

SADAR COURT, 51.

SCALEBY CASTLE, 23.

SCHOLARSHIP, in memory of Thomason, proposed at Rúrki, 189.

SCHOOL-BOOK SOCIETY, 32.

SCHOOLS, elementary, 171–173.

SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, James Thomason became, 52.

SERAMPUR, 'The Friend of India,' published at, 190.

SETTLEMENT, Thirty Years being introduced when James Thomason went to Azamgarh, 56: special work of the Settlement, 57–60: Land, 138–161.

SHÁH JAHÁN, son of Jahángír, 80.

SHELFORD, James Thomason born at, 10, 25: described, 24–26.

SHEERR, J. W., 33 (footnote), his account of Thomason, 132–135, 195.

SIKANDRA, tomb of Akbar at, 114, 130; Orphanage at, 130.

SIMEON, Charles, describes James Thomason's parents, 20, 21: family friend of the Thomason's near Cambridge, 22, 23: employs curate of Shelford, 24: fellow-labourer with Thomas Thomason, 26: receives James Thomason on his being sent as a child to England, 34: Church Missionary Society, 35: Simeon's rooms in King's College, 35: 'Horæ Homileticæ,' his great work, 35: his teaching, 36–38: takes James Thomason to school, 38, 39: works for the conversion of the Jews, 40: Simeon's tours in Scotland, 41: evangelizing efforts, 41.

SIMLA, a Himálayan station to which James Thomason takes his wife, 65: his summer resort, 114: described by him, 115.

SIND, annexed, 45.

SOUTHWICK STREET, London, James Thomason's wife died at, 67, 68.

STANSTED HALL, 40.

STAPLEFORD, one of Simeon's curacies, 24.

STATE SCHOOLS, 173.
STATISTICAL DEPARTMENT, established, 179.
STEPHEN, Mrs., James Thomason's sister Esther, 66.
STRACHEY, Sir John, served under Thomason, 101.

TÁJ MAUSOLEUM, 114.
TÁLUKA, described, 158.
TÁLUKDÁRS, position of, 154–160.
THIRTY YEARS SETTLEMENT being introduced when James Thomason went to Azamgarh, 56.
THOMASON, James, born at Shelford, 1804, 10, 25: died at Bareilly, 1853, 10: a man of peace, 12. his pervading characteristic was Christian seriousness, 15: his capacity for mental toil, 16, 17: his manner, 18: described by Simeon, 20, 21: parentage, 20–33: his first landing as a child in India, 27: sent to England at age of 10, 34; received by Simeon and Mrs. Dornford, 34, 35: school-days at Aspeden, 38: schoolfellow of William Wilberforce, Thomas B. Macaulay, Vaughan and Malden, 39: goes to Stansted, 40: received appointment as a Writer from the Directors of the East India Company, 41: entered Haileybury, 41 sailed to India, 41: landed in India, 1822, 43, 47: India mainly British, 45: Punjab and Sind annexed, 45: Afghán war, 45: served in Lord William Bentinck's secretariat, 46–47: intimate acquaintance with Lord Ellenborough, 47: studied at the College of Fort William, 48: being ill, goes to England on leave, 48: engaged to Miss Grant, 48: married at Maldah 1829, 49: death of his father, 49: becomes guardian to his little sister, 50: appointed Registrar to the Sadar Court, 51: publicly examined in Muhammadan Law, 51: appointed judge in the Jungle Mahals, 51 · goes to England, 1827, 52 made Secretary to Government, 1830, 52 · appointed Magistrate and Collector of Azamgarh, 52 his life as a district officer, 55–64: in 1837 appointed Secretary to the Agra Government, 61. goes to England with his wife who is ill, 66. returns to India, 67 · death of his wife, 68. life at Agra, 71. Member of Revenue Board, 71: his intercourse with Bird, 71–72: goes to Allahábád, 72: at Calcutta in 1842, when Lord Ellenborough arrives, 72: appointed Foreign Secretary, 72: death of his sister, 73: Lieutenant-Governor of the N.-W. Provinces, 73, 91–118. history of Hindustán, 79–82: the Village Communities, 82–85, 150–160. Settlement of N.-W. Provinces, 85–90: Land Revenue, 94–102: his 'Marches,' 102–113: headquarters at Agra, 113, 114: goes to Simla, 115: visits the Punjab, 116. his private life in Government House, 119–135: his description of his Government House at Agra, 119–120, 123: his Provinces denuded of troops, plots hatched, 121: preparations to counteract them, 121: letter quoted, 122: swimming bath at Government House, 123: quotations from his manuscript books, 126–128: his religious sentiments, 129–132: interest in Missions and Missionaries, 130: described in an account by J. W. Sherer, 132–135: heroes in his daughter's novel, founded on Thomason's own character, 135, 136: The Land Settlement, 138–161:

his instructions to Officers and Collectors, 140–148: Tálukdárs, 154–160: Canals of Irrigation, 162–169: irrigation in the 'Great Dry Tract,' 163: works on the Jumna, 163: works at Rúrki, Ganges Canal, 164: Rúrki College, 166–169. public instruction and general policy, 170–180: colleges at Benares, Delhi, Bareilly and Agra, 170: elementary education, 171–174: physical improvement, 174–176: public health, 176–178: Statistical Department established, 179: Sir Charles Napier, quoted, 179. Thomason's views on loyalty, 180: opened college at Benares in 1853, 183–185: nominated Governor of Madras Presidency, 185, 187, but died before news reached him, 187: Scholarship founded at Rúrki in Thomason's memory, 189–190· obituary notice in 'The Friend of India,' 190–191. other obituary notices, 191–197: closing scenes of his life described, 197–207: his death, 207, funeral, 207.

THOMASON, Mrs. James, her life and death, 61–69.

THOMASON, Maynard, daughter of James Thomason (Mrs. Hay), 126, 199.

THOMASON, Elizabeth, daughter of James Thomason, author of the 'Rose and the Lotus,' 135: 'Gifts and Graces,' 136: married, 136: died, 206.

THOMASON, General Charles Simeon, of Royal Engineers, mentioned, 61 (footnote 1).

THOMASON, James, the younger, 199, 201.

THOMASON, Thomas, James' father, described by Simeon, 20· his early life, 23: his wife, 23: goes to Shelford, 24: invites Simeon, 24: James born at Shelford, 25: fellow-labourer with Simeon, 26: joint curate with Henry Martyn, 26: sails for Bengal, 26. studies Arabic, Persian and Urdu, 27, 28· leaves Calcutta, 29: his tour to Northern India, 30, 31: returns to Calcutta, 32. interests himself in institutions for the good of India, 32: marries his son at Maldah, 49: dies at the Mauritius, 49, 208.

THORNTON, Edward, served under Thomason, 101.

THORNTON, John, 87.

TODAR MALL, Hindu Minister of Akbar's, 80.

TREVELYAN, Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles), pressed the reduction of Customs, 178.

TRINITY, Holy, Simeon's Church in Cambridge, 23, 35.

TUCKER, Mr. H. Carre, served under Thomason, 101, extract of letter from Thomason to, 202.

UNCOVENANTED SERVICE, appointments open to Europeans belonging to, 92.

URDU, Thomas Thomason's proficiency in, 27.

VERNACULAR EDUCATION, 171.

'VILLAGE COMMUNITIES,' The, 82–85, 152–160.

WALHALLA of Anglo-Indian worthies, position of James Thomason in the, 10.

WAY, Mr. Lewis, 40.

WEST INDIES, James Thomason's grandfather went to, 22.

WILBERFORCE, William, 25, 39.

WILBERFORCE, Samuel, 40.

ZAMÍNDÁRS, originally land revenue collectors, 158.

THE END.

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